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A Christian Answer to Current Atheism

By

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To My People
of Immanuel Church

FOREWORD

A RETIRED college president in conversation with the writer expressed concern because certain former students had become confused in their thinking about God. Reference was made to the current atheistic propaganda, and the conviction was expressed that a restatement of the grounds of our faith in God should be made. He would have it in a form that would at once face the present significant movements in the thinking world, and yet be free from too much technical discussion. In this form the average man or woman, young or older, might follow with clear appreciation the considerations presented, and arrive at worthy convictions regarding the conclusions reached.

The writer was urged to undertake this ambitious task. Through some weeks of special effort to appraise the actual situation, in the midst of a busy pastorate, he came to the conviction that a need exists for such a restatement for the average man, and that it would be timely. It was decided to present a series of popular discussions to his own congregation on Sunday mornings. The announcement carried the general subject, "Answering the Atheists."

A marked increase in attendance immediately followed the announcement. Very soon inquiries were made as to whether the discussion would be put into permanent form, and literally dozens of persons asked when the book would be issued from the press. This is the way it came about. The sermons have been somewhat elaborated at certain points.

The writer has kept in mind the need of a popular discussion which would be free from too much technicality. It is hoped this general treatment may incite those specially interested to continue the study under the leadership of specialists.

H. A. J.

Milwaukee.

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I

FACING THE ATHEIST PROPAGANDA

IN November, 1925, the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism was incorporated and granted a charter by the State of New York. There have been atheists all along through the years; but this is the first time in the history of America that a body has been organised to destroy man's faith in God. Its avowed purpose is to "atheise" America. It teaches that there is no directing power in the universe, that there is no God and no future life. It asserts that chapters have been organised in many universities, colleges and high schools in the country, as well as in many Masonic lodges. It makes the boast that in three hundred years there will be no churches left in this country.

The Mistaken Prophecy of Voltaire. This boast reminds us of the mistaken prophecy of Voltaire, when he was at the peak of his fame. He declared that the Bible would no longer be in circulation in a hundred years. To-day the very room in which he uttered his presumptuous statement is a repository of the British and Foreign Bible Society and

is packed full of Bibles which have the greatest circulation in their history, being the "greatest sellers" ever known, and translated into some six hundred languages and dialects all over the planet.

What Should We Do About It? What should the Christian Church do about this movement? Some insist that the story of Voltaire's presumptuous and mistaken prophecy is the answer. They say: "Pay no heed to the noisy infidels. They cannot thrive long, for atheism is self-destructive. If there be some who do not believe in God, or imagine they do not, argument will never convince them or lead them to change their views." But that easy-going method of dismissing the subject is not worthy of thoughtful students who have themselves been through the fires of doubts and questionings about the existence of God and many other related subjects. We may not be sanguine about changing the attitude of the atheists, but thousands of honest inquirers deserve "a reason for the hope that is in us."

Modern Science Has Developed Insistent Inquiry. The development of modern science has brought a spirit of inquiry that is more insistent than ever before. Nothing is taken for granted in our day. Everything is questioned, and the questioning attitude is to be encouraged. An open mind is the mark of a growing soul. There can only be honest and intelligent belief when we have intellectual sanctions that confirm clear convictions as a result of

thoroughgoing thinking. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick knows our college life. In an article in the *New York Times* he wrote: "We have reason for anxious concern lest the youth of the new generation may lose that religious faith in God and in the realities of the spiritual life on which alone an abiding civilisation can be founded. Many students are without chart or compass as far as guiding principles of religion are concerned."

Young People Having Doubts Are Seeking Help. Not long ago a young woman came to the writer for help. She had been brought up in a Christian home and had been active in Christian work, not simply from a sense of duty, but because she loved her religious atmosphere. Then came the insidious teaching of mechanistic and behaviouristic psychology, and it seemed to her as if the bottom had suddenly dropped out of her religious life as great waves of doubt swept over her soul. She is typical of many. Moreover, a vast amount of modern fiction gives no hint that man should be concerned about God. Indeed many of the writers of this fiction, which has such a tremendous influence upon the popular mind, are avowed atheists, and their books are filled with an atmosphere of laxity calculated to develop indifference regarding the moral obligations that touch all phases of our daily living, destroying the sanctities of the home and the sacredness of personality.

May a personal word be permitted at this point?

The writer has gone through these fires of doubts and questionings, and can never forget those student days when he was not sure that he believed anything. Hence he is bound to be keenly sympathetic with any one who has a similar experience in any degree. He remembers well the man whose message of personal experience, after going through a period of doubt to a place where his feet were on the rock, gave him an eager desire to talk with that man. It was in that friendship he found light and steady progress toward clear convictions, by remembering that all theories must be tested by the way they work in the daily life. For truth must be in order to life.

Doubts Due to Tragic Experiences of Suffering. It is a common experience that many people have had their faith in God shaken because of the sorrows and sufferings, the inequalities and injustices, that have place in so many lives. Especially has it been difficult to believe in God as a God of love since he allows such hardships to occur in the lives of those who love him best. These are very real perplexities. Just recently a lady told the writer of such an experience which was unusually tragic. It seemed to her as if the door of faith had been suddenly shut and all was dark. Strive as she might she could find no standing ground for some time where she experienced any comfort or hope. She is typical of thousands. Other thousands have been embittered by the fact that some men live in

luxury while multitudes starve in poverty and misery. These conditions are very real stumbling-blocks to many, and it is not strange that they should be. These are difficult problems needing light.

The Far-Reaching Influence of Mechanistic Psychology. Beyond question the most serious development in the thinking world, calculated to destroy one's belief in God, is that of the mechanistic and behaviouristic psychology. This growing influence has swept the academic world in every part of our land, where many thousands of our susceptible young people are subject to its subtle and insidious teachings, not realising how it reaches into the very citadel of human values and blights them, leaving its victims dazed and wondering what has happened. This teaching reduces all behaviour to the interaction of physiological mechanisms, rules out consciousness as a determining factor in conduct, substituting "human response to various stimuli." It is materialistic, naturalistic, atheistic. It dismisses such words as "mind" and "soul" as creatures of the imagination, and leaves no place whatever for a living God. We shall consider this subject when we come to the discussion of personality and the views of the advocates of a personalistic psychology. Meantime let us have no doubt that this influence is making more atheists than all others combined.

Many Atheists Find Comfort in Professor

Leuba's Statistics. Professor James H. Leuba, of Bryn Mawr College, has given great comfort to his fellow-atheists by his report of an inquiry made among certain college students as to their belief in God and immortality. He reports that fewer seniors hold to this belief than they did when freshmen, which proves in so far the character of the teaching to be found in those colleges. Greater interest has been shown in Professor Leuba's inquiry of one thousand scientists whose names were taken from *American Men of Science.* Of these he reports 41.8 per cent as believers in God and immortality, while 58.2 per cent are unbelievers. But let it be noted that Professor Leuba did not ask these men if they believed in God; but prepared his own question to which they were to answer yes or no.

Leuba's Question About Belief in God. The report in question is found in Professor Leuba's book, *The Belief in God and Immortality.* This is the way he put his question: "I believe in a God in intellectual and effective communication with man, I mean a God to whom one may pray in the expectation of receiving an answer. By 'answer' I do not mean the subjective, psychological effect of prayer." This is the question to which the people approached were requested to answer yes or no. Of course Professor Leuba had a right to ask any one to answer that question, and it is interesting to note that 41 per cent of the scientists

approached answered it in the affirmative; but he had no right to announce to the world that 58 per cent of the scientists did not believe in God because they refused to answer his particular question, for it is well known that many people believe wholeheartedly in an intelligent Creator who is interested in His creatures and especially in man. At the same time they hesitate to assert confidently their belief in the degree to which He answers our prayers. The report is misleading.

Leuba Disappointed at the Reception Given His Report. In the second edition of his book Professor Leuba expresses his disappointment because "certain influential secular reviews, devoting considerable space to religion, either maintained complete silence about the book or merely announced its appearance," and continues: "But if this silence is distressing in popular magazines, it is still more so when it is maintained by exclusively scientific journals." The fact is certainly significant, and would seem to indicate that these keen-minded publishers, appreciating the misleading character of the statistics, in view of the "framed" question by Professor Leuba, refrained from publishing the Leuba report as to the number of unbelievers among scientists.

Another reason why many publishers would not be inclined to give space to Professor Leuba's findings, is that his conclusions are far from being in

agreement with the best thinking of our day. He concludes that belief in God is destined to decrease "with the diffusion of knowledge and the intellectual qualities that make for eminence in scholarly pursuits." That is to say, Professor Leuba declares that men of intellectual eminence in the realm of scholarship cannot be expected to believe in God, such belief being entertained only by men lacking intellectual ability.

Against Leuba's Position We Place That of Professor Millikan. One could not ask for a more complete repudiation of Professor Leuba's contention than is found in a recent book entitled, *Science and Life,* by Professor Robert A. Millikan, of the California Institute of Technology, awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1923, the Hughes Medal of the Royal Society of Great Britain, and the Farraday Medal of the London Chemical Society, 1924. It will scarcely be questioned that Professor Millikan is quite as advanced as Professor Leuba in "intellectual eminence in the realm of scholarship." In this book Professor Millikan says: "Science is just as often misrepresented as is religion by men of little vision, of no appreciation of its limitations, and of imperfect comprehension of the real rôle which it plays in human life—by men who lose sight of all spiritual values, and therefore exert an influence upon youth which is unsettling, irreligious and sometimes immoral."

Millikan Finds No Conflict Between Science and Religion.

"The fact which seems to me altogether obvious and undisputed by thoughtful men," continues Doctor Millikan, "is that there is actually no conflict whatever between science and religion when each is correctly understood. The simplest and probably the most convincing proof of the truth of that statement is found in the testimony of the greatest minds who have been leaders in the field of science, upon the one hand, and in the field of religion upon the other."

Among the scientists Professor Millikan names Sir Isaac Newton, James Clerk-Maxwell, Faraday, Kelvin and Lord Raleigh, all outstanding believers in God and religion. He quotes the inscription on the tomb of Louis Pasteur, "Happy is he who carries a God within him, an ideal to which he is obedient, an ideal of the virtues of the Gospel."

Leading Scientists Avow Their Belief in God. Professor Millikan recalls the fact that in 1923 there appeared a statement bearing on this subject, which includes the following paragraph:

"It is a sublime conception of God which is furnished by science, and one wholly consonant with the highest ideals of religion, when it represents him as revealing himself through countless ages in the development of the earth as an abode for man and in the age-long inbreathing of life into its constituent matter, culminating in man with his spiritual nature and all his God-like powers."

This statement was given wide publicity, and was signed by the following scientists:

James Rowland Angell, Psychologist, President of Yale University.

George David Birkhoff, Mathematician, Head Professor, Harvard University.

John Merle Coulter, Botanist, Head of Department, University of Chicago.

Gano Dunn, Engineer, Chairman National Research Council, Washington, D. C.

William Wallace Campbell, Astronomer, Director of Lick Observatory and President of the University of California.

Edwin Grant Conklin, Zoölogist, Head of Department, Princeton University.

William James Mayo, Surgeon, Head of Mayo Foundation, Rochester, Minnesota.

John C. Merriam, Paleontologist, President Carnegie Institute, Washington, D. C.

Robert A. Millikan, Physicist, Director of Norman Bridge Laboratory of Physics, Pasadena, Cal.

Michael I. Pupin, Physicist and Engineer, Columbia University.

Henry Fairfield Osborn, Paleontologist, President the American Museum of Natural History.

Charles D. Walcott, Geologist, President of the National Academy of Science and head of the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D. C.

William Henry Welch, Pathologist, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.

The statement is also signed by a long list of men who are recognised leaders in the religious world, and an equally long list of men of affairs. It is a well-known fact that practically all of the college presidents in this country are Christians, and that the same thing is true of the Presidents of the United States. The exceptions are so few that the percentage is negligible. Perhaps Professor Leuba overlooked these intellectual giants in the realms of science, education and industry when he said that men of intellectual eminence could not be expected to believe in God. Perhaps he would scarcely wish to declare that Sir Isaac Newton, called "the greatest brain in a thousand years" was not as highly trained intellectually as any modern psychologist. We submit that Professor Leuba has been discredited by the facts herewith presented.

Many Have Come to Light Out of Darkness. To those who have been led astray let the assuring word be spoken that thousands have found light out of the darkness. The lady mentioned above, after months of earnest study, found a quiet peace, with her faith restored in God, as her loving Father. Moreover there have been men who were outstanding leaders in the thinking world who were pronounced atheists and materialists, who have been completely changed in their attitude and have become earnest champions of an intelligent faith in God. One of these was Professor George J. Romanes, Professor of Biology in the University

of Cambridge, of whom we shall have more to say later.

Our Plan for the Present Discussion. There are solid reasons for an intelligent faith in God. It is our plan to present them along several lines of approach, all converging upon the point of cumulative evidence justifying our conclusions. Therefore we ask for patience on the part of the reader, appreciating the far-reaching significance of the study, and desiring to bring into view all of those considerations which have value each in its place.

Our Study Involves Unescapable Obligations. The questions of the existence and nature of God involve the whole realm of religion with its moral obligations and implications. Here we find the supreme values which all sincere men recognise in the building of character into finest manhood and womanhood. The thinking world long ago recognised the difference it makes in a man's life whether he believes in God or does not. For this belief goes to the roots of the deepest convictions and to the heights of the noblest aspirations of the human soul.

Every Person Is Living One Way or the Other. Every intelligent person is living as if there is a God, or as if there is not. If he goes about his affairs without taking God into account, without any spirit of thanksgiving or habit of prayer or programme of worship; then he is a practical atheist whether he realises it and admits it or not.

There are some people who deny that they are atheists and claim to be simply agnostics. But since they have no place for God in their daily lives, they cannot fail to see that they must be classed as practical atheists, with those who are definite in their denial. All such people are Godless.

One of These Two Views Is True, the Other False. It is our purpose to prove that it is more reasonable to believe in God than not to do so. If we succeed, then the conviction will manifestly carry with it the obligations which reach down into our daily living in all of its programme. We are seeking truth in order to discover the fullest significance of life.

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II

OUR THINKING MUST BE POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE

THE scientific world has settled its method of procedure in its search after truth. It insists that all investigation shall begin with facts in the realm of experience, either the experience of the inner consciousness or the experiment of the laboratory. We call this the inductive, or pragmatic, or laboratory method. Let us realise what this method involves. Every fact in the range of our actual knowledge is touched by a mystery which no man comprehends. However plain and simple the fact—the growth of a blade of grass—it is touched by a mystery that the human mind cannot fully comprehend. On the other hand there is no mystery that baffles human comprehension but what you will find touching it somewhere a plain, unescapable fact.

Two Ways of Approaching the Study of Anything. It follows that there are two ways of approaching the study of anything. One is to approach it on the side of its fact, accepting the fact at its full value, and never denying the fact because of the mystery which touches it. This is

the scientific method. All the progress made in human knowledge has been made in this way. But the other way of approaching the study of anything is to approach it on the side of its mystery, and refuse to accept the fact because you cannot comprehend its mystery. That is the unscientific method. All the atheists with whom the writer has conversed have approached the subject of believing in God on the side of the mysteries involved, rather than on the side of the facts to be taken into account. It is hopeless to attempt to make any progress in knowledge by that method. The only way to advance in knowledge is to make the most of the facts which must be considered in connection with any subject, thus pushing the mystery further back. Every sincere man must be willing to adopt the scientific method and accept the facts for all they are worth as a beginning of earnest research.

Consider the Fact of Electricity and Its Mystery. Take as an illustration the fact of electricity. We know it for its amazing energy, its light and heat and motive power, its marvellous capacity in communication and propulsion. Yet it is touched by a mystery which baffles Edison and Marconi and every other physicist. We could not imagine any sane person refusing to accept the fact of electricity because of its mystery. It is as we have made the most of it at every possible point that we have pushed its mystery further back, knowing more of it every passing year.

Many People Adopt This Unscientific Method Only in Religion. The fact is that many people never adopt this unscientific method anywhere except in matters of religion. One wonders why this is so. Some years ago a fellow minister in New York told me of a conversation he had with a lawyer about becoming a Christian. The lawyer was raising intellectual difficulties which he said hindered him. My friend answered the objections fairly, as he thought, and by the admission of the lawyer himself; yet he travelled in a circle and repeated his objections.

Then my friend said: "If your difficulties were all cleared up to your intellectual satisfaction, would you be willing to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master, and regulate your daily life by a programme that you know would be acceptable to him?" The lawyer replied: "I am afraid I would not." My friend returned: "Exactly; and your reply proves that your real trouble is not intellectual, but moral. It is in the realm of your will. You have been camouflaging the real facts in our conversation."

A Young Man Who Was Confused in His Thinking. There are, however, many sincere people who are all at sea as to what to believe. In fact they do not know how to go about learning to believe. A few years ago a young man in the city of Chicago came to the writer to discuss the problem of religious beliefs. He announced himself

an agnostic and seemed rather proud of the fact. We suggested that he had nothing to be proud of if he expected to remain an agnostic permanently. He admitted that he was not satisfied, which explained his request for a talk. We asked him to turn from the negative to the positive and tell us what he did believe. He drew from his pocket several quotations which he read, saying he thought they expressed his ideas. We asked if he realised that everything he had read consisted of negations. Not one sentence indicated a positive attitude toward anything.

He had not realised it. We stressed the fact that *negations never get one anywhere,* and only result in destructive thinking. *One can never arrive until he thinks constructively.* It is easy to be critical; but the world needs builders. He was living in an atmosphere of discontent because of his negative attitude toward truth.

Begin With a Fact You Cannot Doubt. He said he did not know how to begin to think constructively. We suggested that he begin with something he could not doubt, and determine to be positive and constructive in his thinking, as far as possible, immediately. He agreed. Then we said: "You cannot doubt that in the realm of vital reality the most important thing in the world is character." He said he must believe that. We urged him to see that he had a solid rock in this conviction which would have far-reaching effects in his further

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thinking. Then we suggested a second fact, that the character of Jesus Christ was the finest the world ever knew. He saw this next step in positive thinking and surprised us by quickly asserting his conviction that the statement is true. The third suggestion was that he must realise that the character which Christ lived was His own teaching about life put into His own daily living before men. He thought awhile and replied that he believed this also. We suggested that he was making a splendid start.

He was leaving for Detroit that night. We suggested that if he would study the teachings of Jesus with a view to adopting his programme in daily life, he would gain light rapidly and find himself developing a character like Christ's. He admitted that he had never read the Gospels with a purpose, and promised to do so with an open mind, all the time keeping before him the purpose to think constructively as a means of building character, with Christ as his teacher and example. Some time afterwards his father came to us with a letter, in which his son announced that he had accepted Christ as his Saviour and had come joyously into an utterly new experience of definite convictions and conscious strength.

The Transforming Experience of a Chinese Student. Some years ago in the city of Hong Kong we met a Chinese student who had studied in England, where he became convinced that Chris-

tianity is the true religion, but said he could not understand it. He said he had an English New Testament and had been marking all the statements he could not understand. There were references to people of whom he knew nothing and various incidents in the past about which he was ignorant, etc. We suggested that he was approaching his study on the side of the mysteries instead of on the side of the facts, and asked him to put the copy he had away and get another. We asked him to agree to read the four Gospels and the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, thus studying the story of the life of Christ and the beginnings of the Christian Church, and to *underscore everything he did understand,* everything that was clear, especially everything he recognised as good advice to live by. After some questioning and discussion, he agreed.

Very soon he reported that he was getting light every day. As the days passed he would come into the room where his friend was exclaiming, with a shining face, "I am getting more light!" No honest seeker after truth has failed to have that experience. He turned from mysteries to facts and began to make the most of the facts. Steadily the mysteries were pushed further back.

The Experience of a Chicago Lawyer. Some years ago a Chicago lawyer asked for a talk about his problems. He said some people called him an atheist, but he was only an agnostic, since he did not deny the existence of God, he simply did not

know. He admitted, however, that God had no place in his daily life, and further admitted that he was therefore a practical atheist. He said he could not stultify his intellect by pretending to believe things he could not understand. We asked for a specific illustration. He replied that he could not believe that anything had no beginning and no ending. We asked him if he believed in space. He saw the point. Of course he had to believe in space; yet the human, finite mind cannot imagine space as having a beginning or ending. He exclaimed: "Why, I never thought of that!"

In a short time he realised that he had been far from thoroughgoing in his thinking, because he had been thinking in the realm of negations, and never arriving at definite convictions, bearing upon the positive side of life. In that hour he changed from negative to positive thinking. He sincerely desired the truth. In time he became an earnest Christian.

Tyndall and Moody on Prayer as an Experience. This scientific method in thinking bars out a man from the discussion of a subject about which he has had no personal experience, in so far as he would assume to speak with authority on that subject. Some years ago Professor Tyndall wrote an essay on the subject of *Prayer*, denying the accepted view of the people who are accustomed to pray. He was asked if he had ever prayed, and replied that he would not be so silly. About the same time Mr. Dwight L. Moody wrote a little monograph on the

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subject *The Power of Prayer.* Every statement in that little book had been verified in Moody's personal experience. It would have been presumptuous in Mr. Moody to have denied some of Professor Tyndall's statements about biology or physics; for he did not know the subject. But it was equally presumptuous and unscientific for Professor Tyndall to discuss a subject about which he admitted he had no personal experience. It is so easy to talk out of ignorance and prejudice; but it is always unscientific to do so.

Sir Isaac Newton and Professor Halley. One day Sir Isaac Newton was in a group where Professor Halley, the discoverer of the comet that bears his name, was talking in a derogatory way about the Bible and the Christian religion. After listening a few moments, Sir Isaac said, in substance: "Halley, I like to hear you talk about Mathematics and Astronomy, for you have been a student of those subjects. But, Halley, you have made it perfectly evident in the last few minutes that you do not know what you are talking about when you discuss Christianity and the Bible. Your point of view is one of ignorance and prejudice. I have been a Christian for forty years and I have proved in actual experience the values of the teachings of the Bible in daily life, so that I know what I am talking about when I discuss Christianity." Thus Sir Isaac was scientific in his attitude, whereas Professor Halley was unscientific in his.

Professor Leuba Concedes Lack of Experience in Religion. Professor Leuba frankly admits that such experiences as many Christians know in their daily lives are foreign to his personal experience. He says concerning those who hold to his theories: "They have no belief in an interfering providence, and consequently none in prayer. Responsibility they feel toward none but themselves and those affected by their doings. Adoration, worship, devotion, piety, in the common acceptance of the term, are incompatible with these negations. Outwardly they have no cult, return no thanks, ask for nothing from the powers of the world for they know them to be deaf to such supplications and insensible to human thankfulness."

Professor William James on the Need of Religious Experience. The materialists have a theory that all religions have developed from fear in various forms. They hold that religious happiness is only a sense of "relief" occasioned by escapes from evil either experienced or imagined. But Professor William James, of Harvard, in his *Gifford Lectures*, declares the theory to be inadequate. He says:

"In its most characteristic embodiments religious happiness is no mere feeling of escape. It cares no longer for escape. It consents to the evil outwardly as a form of sacrifice—inwardly it knows it to be permanently overcome. If you ask how religion thus falls on the thorns and faces death and in the very act

annuls annihilation, I cannot explain the matter, for it is religion's secret, and to understand it *you must yourself have been a religious man of the extreme type.*"

That is to say, Professor James declares that men like Professor Leuba, who frankly confess that they have no religious experience such as thousands of Christians have, are incompetent to discuss problems of religion which involves an experience entirely outside of their ken.

Teaching Which Denies Actual Religious Experience Is Destructive. When men calmly deny the reality of the religious experiences of which thousands are quite vividly conscious, they put themselves into the realm of theoretical teachers about a subject of which they confess themselves to be ignorant. Imagine a man declaring that the close harmonies in Bach's fugues are discords, and trying to justify his position on the ground that he has never had any personal experience in such rich harmonies. Others have had the experience which he has missed. He would scarcely be recognised as the right man to discuss the subject of which he confessedly does not know from experience. It is inconceivable that one could read the actual experiences of men like David Livingstone, or Dr. Grenfell or John Wesley, and still deny that their reports were based upon most vital realities in the realm of man's consciousness. Most unthinkable of all is the idea that men could study

the Gospel story of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, and not feel the transforming power of religious experiences.

The Striking Conversion of a Great Scientist. It will be worth our while to recall the historic instance of the conversion of a great scientist who was an atheist and materialist. Professor George J. Romanes was Professor of Biology in the University of Cambridge, and was editor of the magazine entitled *Nature*. He was an ardent evolutionist and was called the greatest Darwinian after Darwin. Early in his career he said he could not believe in God or the immortality of the soul because he could not demonstrate the reasonableness of these views to the satisfaction of his intellect. But he frankly confessed that he was not satisfied, and that he was earnestly seeking light. One day, when using his microscope, he suddenly had the conviction that there is a directing power back of physical forces. He paused and said to himself: "Science demands, and rightly, that we must have experience as the basis of our beliefs and convictions. Is there not somewhere within the range of human experience the evidence of any directing power back of physical forces?" At once he thought of the human will.

The Will Is of the Nature of Spirit. Then Romanes remembered that Alfred Russell Wallace, another eminent scientist, had urged that the will is of the nature of spirit, and that it is the nature

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of spirit to control physical forces, the mechanistic psychologists to the contrary notwithstanding. At that moment Romanes ceased to be a materialist, and changed his thinking from a negative to a positive character. Then he awoke to the fact that he had not been truly scientific in his thinking, because he had been calling himself a student of nature and had been neglecting the study of human nature, which is the most important part of nature. He at once began to study man as he had never done before.

The first fact which arrested his attention was the fact of the universal religious instinct in man. He had argued that the only reasonable inference from the recognition of the presence of a self-conscious, volitional, intelligent spirit in man, directing the physical forces under his control, is that back of all physical forces there must be a spirit being, self-conscious, intelligent, volitional, directing and controlling the universe of worlds. The uniformity of all law and the solidarity of the universe compelled Romanes to this conviction. Now he added the conviction that the religious nature of man pointed to the religious nature of God. Hence he came to believe in God as not only the creator and ruler of the universe of worlds, but also as a being of moral and spiritual qualities of character.

It is not our purpose at this time to report the full experience of Professor Romanes which led him to become an earnest Christian. We have used

his story thus far to illustrate the emphasis we are making upon the value of thinking positively, rather than negatively. After Romanes became a Christian, his one great sorrow was in the fact that for several years he had been exerting a hurtful influence upon hundreds of students who had been under his instruction. They said: "There is the brilliant Romanes, keen in his thinking. He is an atheist. Why should we imagine there is anything real in religion?" Yet during all of those years Romanes was ignoring facts of most vital value, because they were entirely outside of the range of his experience, and he supposed they did not really exist. When he came to know these wonderful experiences as the most real in all the range of his knowledge, he repudiated his former atheistic and materialistic positions, not only confessing to a profound faith in God, but becoming an earnest member of the Christian Church.

III

SHALL WE BELIEVE IN AN INTELLIGENT CREATOR—OR IN AIMLESS CHANCE?

THE atheists teach that there is no intelligent being directing the world as creator and ruler. The only alternative to this view is that the present state of things came into being by accident or aimless chance. We indicated in our opening chapter some reasons why some people find it hard to believe in God; but multitudes will agree that it is far harder to accept such an explanation of the existing universe. Let us keep in mind that our thinking to be scientific must begin with facts in the range of our own experiences, and from these we must draw our inferences, our convictions concerning anything that emerges in the world about us.

Human Experience Regarding Things Made by Man. The great clock at Strasbourg has excited the admiration and wonder of all observers, with its combinations of moons and planets moving through the days and months with the accuracy of the heavenly bodies, with its groups of figures that appear and disappear with equal regularity as the

great clock strikes the hours. To suggest to any man who knows of the design of the maker of that clock that no intelligent mind planned it, and that it all just came by chance, would be to stultify one's intellect. Yet the universe of worlds is just one vast clock, moving with amazing accuracy through the years so that astronomers calculate for decades in advance their exact movements. To suggest that this gigantic mechanism was never planned, but just came by chance, is just as clearly to stultify one's intellect. The only conclusion of common sense, based upon man's own experience in creating things according to an intelligent plan, is that the universe on every hand indicates creative thought and an intelligent plan.

The Mathematical Science of Probabilities. Men generally consider the most exact of our sciences to be Mathematics. One branch of Mathematics is the Science of Probabilities. Let us consider the several adjustments and combinations of the human eye, and ask the Science of Probabilities what the chances are that such a combination just happened by accident. The reply of this exact science is that the chances are a million to one against it ever happening, and also a million to one against that combination ever occurring a second time. Yet we have millions of human eyes, and the whole amazing combination and adjustments of the human body, and the still more wonderful nature of the human consciousness! The Science of Probabili-

ties tells us these never came by chance, but came into being only as a result of a creative plan far above man's capacity to imagine.

Lord Kelvin Insists That Science Demands Creative Power. One of the greatest leaders in modern science is Lord Kelvin. In his famous Chancellor's address in the University of Glasgow, in April, 1903, he said:

"Science positively affirms creative power. It is not in dead matter that we live and move and have our being. We are absolutely forced by science to believe with perfect confidence in a directing Power, an influence other than physical, or dynamical, or electrical forces. There is nothing between this scientific belief and the acceptance of the theory of a fortuitous concourse of atoms. Modern scientific men agree that such a view is utterly absurd in respect to the coming into existence, or the growth, or the continuance of molecular combinations presented in the bodies of living things. Forty years ago I asked Liebig, walking in the country, if he believed the grass and flowers we saw grew by chemical forces. He answered: 'No, no more than I could believe that a book on Botany describing them could grow by mere chemical forces.' Every action of free will is a miracle to physical and chemical and mathematical science. If you think strongly enough, you will be forced by science to belief in God."

Lord Salisbury and Charles Darwin Agreed in This View. In his address as President of the British Association for the Advancement of

Science, Lord Salisbury said: "Overwhelmingly strong proofs of intelligent and benevolent design lie around us, and if ever perplexities, whether metaphysical or scientific, turn us away for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible force showing to us through nature the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living things depend on an everlasting Creator and Ruler." Charles Darwin, in the first edition of *Origin of Species,* said: "To my mind it accords better with *what we know of the laws impressed on matter by the Creator,* that the production and extinction of the past and present inhabitants of the world should have been due to secondary causes like those determining the birth and death of the individual."

The Strong Statement of Immanuel Kant. The thinking world recognises Immanuel Kant as one of the most profound minds among the intellectual giants of the centuries. Touching this subject, he says: "It is impossible to contemplate the fabric of the world without recognising the certain manifestation of the hand of God in the perfections of its correlations. Reason feels a just indignation at the dauntless folly which dares to ascribe all this to chance and a happy accident. It must be that the highest wisdom conceived the plan and infinite power carried it into execution. *All things which set forth reciprocal harmonies in nature must be bound together in a single existence on which they collectively depend.*

"Thus there exists a being of all beings, an infinite understanding and a self-existent Wisdom, from which nature, in the whole aggregate of her correlations, derives existence. It is not allowable to maintain that the activity of nature is prejudicial to the existence of a Highest Being. The perfection of its development, the order and harmony of its laws, give conclusive demonstration of the Godhead from whom these relations are derived."

At Great Epochal Moments in the Processes of Nature Science Demands Direct Creative Activity. In the processes of nature there have been great epochal moments marked by the appearance in the order of things of new features not existing before and carrying larger capacity for higher development than the previously existing nature was capable of realising. Modern scientists demand that these additional features, which are entirely distinct and different from anything before existing in nature, can only be explained by the recognition of the direct activity of creative power. The atheists have held that the present processes in nature have gone on endlessly through the ages. But we shall present some facts to prove this contention to be untenable.

Facts Involved in the New Science of Radioactivity. It was in 1896 that Alexandre Becquerel discovered radioactivity. Hence it is a twentieth century development, bringing facts to light that refute the position of the atheists. In radioactive

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substances the atoms are constantly giving off emanations accompanied by heat. One of the radioactive groups is known as the Uranium group. Uranium is forever giving off emanations, and after a certain number are given off of a piece of Uranium the result is Ionium. Then the piece of Ionium continues to give off emanations until it becomes Radium. Radium in turn gives off emanations until it becomes Helium. Thus by giving off emanations ceaselessly each particle changes into the next lower form of the Uranium family. The spectroscope proves that radioactive substances in the sun and stars are the same as those in the earth, and subject to the same law of radiation. It follows that all of them are steadily diminishing in bulk as they continue to give off emanations. Moreover, there is nothing known that is taking the place of these diminishing substances.

Professor Frederick Soddy, of the University of Glasgow, discusses this subject in his book *Matter and Energy*. His homely illustration of what is going on is that we see this process in the diminishing coal supply on our earth by emanations of heat. While coal is not a radioactive substance, its diminishing supply illustrates the radioactive process, especially as we know of nothing to replenish the supply of coal.

The Present Cosmic Process Had a Beginning in Time. The inevitable fact proved by radioactivity is that had the present process in nature been going

on as it is now through endless ages, its present form would have been utterly exhausted and changed long ago. Hence *three facts must be recognised:*

First, that the physical universe in its present form is a stupendous clock that is running down. The steadily diminishing radioactive substances make this conclusion unescapable. Our own earth is slowly contracting because of these emanations of heat. Ages may be required to make an appreciable difference; but the fact remains.

Second, this can only mean that the present cosmic process had a beginning at a definite point of time. At that moment it must have entered upon a new era different from what may have gone before.

Third, these unescapable facts compel the recognition of the presence of a direct creative power that started this present process in its new and specific order of being.

Spontaneous Generation of Life an Unscientific Assumption. There was a time when there was no life on this earth. The second epochal moment in the process of nature was when life appeared. The atheists are compelled to insist that life came by spontaneous generation. Otherwise their case is lost. They claim that one day the dead dirt just became alive of itself. But science insists that the organic elements in protoplasm are something absolutely different from anything found in inorganic

matter. It bears every evidence that it is something injected into the inorganic matter which of itself it could never have produced. Professor Tyndall made very extensive investigations into this realm of research. Again and again he tried to discover the slightest fact which would give a semblance of justification of the theory; but he never could find it. His conclusion is this:

"I share with Virchow the opinion that the proofs of the spontaneous generation of life are still wanting. I also hold with Virchow that the failures to discover such spontaneous generation of life have been so lamentable that *the doctrine is utterly discredited.*"

In the light of this testimony no man can be scientific and still suggest the idea of the spontaneous generation of life. The only alternative must be the presence of a direct creative power as the explanation of life. Science insists that all of our knowledge compels the conviction that life on this planet has only come from antecedent life. Hence we must conclude that back of all living things and beings on the earth there is a living Creator who is the source of the life which we know. As Lord Kelvin said, "something other than chemical, or dynamical or electrical forces." Alfred Russel Wallace declared: "The very first vegetable cell must have possessed altogether new powers. Here we have an indication of a new creative power at work."

Consciousness Also Indicates Direct Creation. The third epochal moment in the process of nature was when consciousness appeared. Wallace said: "The advance from the vegetable to the animal kingdom is completely beyond all explanation by matter, its laws and forces. It is the introduction of sensation or consciousness, constituting the fundamental distinction between the animal and vegetable kingdoms." That is to say, the then existing nature could no more produce consciousness of itself than it could produce life. The only consistent alternative is the view that a creative being imparted consciousness in a psychical nature to the animal, even as he imparted life to inanimate nature.

The Human Mind Different in Kind. The fourth epochal moment was when a human mind appeared on the earth. The atheists insist that man's mind is only different in degree from that of lower animals. But leading scientists insist that the difference is not simply in degree but in kind. Professor Romanes, in his *Mental Evolution of Animals,* declares that the distinction "consists in the power which the human mind displays of objectifying ideas, or setting one state of mind before another state, and contemplating the relation between them. This is the power to think by introspective reflection in the light of self-consciousness. We have no evidence to show that the animal is capable of thus objectifying its own ideas. Indeed

I will go further and affirm that we have the best evidence to prove that no animal can possibly attain to these excellencies of subjective life."

Professor Lloyd Morgan, the naturalist, in his *Animal Life and Intelligence*, says:

"I do think that we have in the introduction of the analytical faculty so definite and marked a new departure that we should emphasise it by saying that the faculty of perception, in its various forms, *differs generically* from the faculty of conception. And believing as I do that conception is beyond the power of my favourite and clever dog, I am forced to believe that *his mind is different generically from my own.*"

Wallace, in his book on *Darwinism*, sets forth his conviction that:

"Man's entire nature and all his faculties, whether moral, intellectual or spiritual, have not been derived from their rudiments in the lower animals in the same manner as his physical structure has been derived. The inference I would draw from this class of phenomena is that *a superior intelligence guided the development of man in a definite direction and for a definite purpose*, just as man has guided the development of many vegetable and animal forms."

Man's Power of Language Is Unique. Another distinctive endowment of man is his unique power of language. Professor Max Müeller, the great philologist, says:

"Between the language of animals and that of man there is no natural bridge. Human language such as we possess requires a faculty of which no trace has ever been discovered in lower animals. Rational language is traced back to roots, and every root is a sign of a general conception or abstract idea of which the animal is incapable."

It should be remembered that the average brain capacity of man is ninety cubic inches, while that of the anthropoid ape is thirty-five cubic inches.

Man's Moral Nature Also Distinctive. Darwin, in his *Descent of Man,* recognises the unique character of man's moral nature. He says:

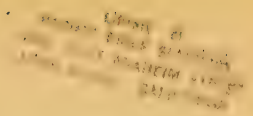
"The moral sense perhaps affords the best and highest distinction between man and the lower animals. *Man alone can with certainty be ranked as a moral being.* He alone is capable of comparing his past and future actions and motives, and of approving or disapproving of them. We have no reason to suppose that any of the lower animals have this capacity."

In this connection it is significant to note the fact that the most degraded savages have, in a remarkably short time, revealed the capacity to develop moral and religious appreciations of Christian teachings, responding to the constraints of the Christian religion, developing noblest spiritual ideals and building finest Christian character. This fact proves the infinite gulf between them and the highest brutes.

Michael Pupin on Spiritual Realities. One of the recognised leaders in modern science is Professor Michael Pupin, of Columbia University. In his new book, *The New Reformation,* he says:

"The organic universe constructs out of the cosmic energy orderly structures performing orderly functions. Can it perform this mission by the revelation of physical realities only? No, it cannot. It must search for other realities which are outside the domain of physical science. This leads to the recognition of spiritual realities which, like the physical realities, are rooted in human experience."

These findings of leading scientists in the modern world of research and thought all make against the position of the atheists, who deny the existence of an intelligent creator, as unreasonable and untenable. The evidence of plan and purpose in all creation, especially in the life of man, the evidence of direct creative agency at the great epochal moments in the process of nature, and the evidence of the infinite reach of thought and power in the universe compel this recognition.



IV

FAILURES OF ATHEISM

IN the previous chapters we have emphasised the fact that we are seeking truth in order to life. We have reviewed the facts and findings of modern science to prove that the position of the atheist regarding an intelligent creator and ruler of the universe is unscientific and unreasonable. In doing this we have reasoned from man's actual experience in the realm of his creative activity. The story of man's progress in various realms of achievement we call history. The product of man's achievement we call civilisation.

Various Civilisations Noted. We speak of the oriental civilisation in the Far East, of the Greek and Roman, of the Christian and Mohammedan civilisations. The study of history will reveal the fact that at the last analysis the dominant and determining factor in these civilisations is not the commercial factor, nor the intellectual factor, nor the social factor; but has always been the moral and religious factor. That is to say, the different beliefs of these various peoples concerning God, or several gods, has been this determining factor. No one can be in China very long without realising that

Confucianism saturates China's life and dominates it as no other influence has begun to do. It is equally true of Buddhism in Burma and Siam. Beyond question Hinduism has been the determining factor in India's life for centuries. So Mohammedanism has dominated the Turkish empire for centuries before its recent divisions. It is likewise apparent that the different schools of the Christian religion have dominated the lands where they have flourished.

Atheism Has No Philosophy of Life. All of these various peoples have a religio-philosophy of life, developed along the lines of their religious beliefs. That is to say, their philosophies have been shaped by their beliefs in God, or several gods, about man's relation to God or the gods, about how to solve man's problems in view of the fact of sin, and teachings about a future life. Mankind everywhere has been concerned about these philosophies of life. The point to stress in this connection is that atheism has no philosophy of life. It has never done any positive and constructive thinking in an effort to improve man's condition or solve the great human problems. As we have said, it is easy to criticise; but the world needs builders of character into the finest type of manhood and womanhood. We frankly admit that believers in God have fallen short of the ideals taught by their founders; but we also contend that it has been in the realm of

man's faith in God that we have developed the finest civilisation known in human history.

It Is Time to Challenge Atheism to Reveal Its Fruits. It is time to challenge atheism to tell us what it has ever done to advance human civilisation, what contribution it has ever made toward the amelioration of human suffering, or for the uplift of the race. Where will you find an atheist hospital on the planet? Where will you find an atheist college that has exerted an uplifting influence upon its community? Where have the atheists ever built altruistic institutions of any sort? There have been brilliant minds among them; but when you measure carefully the total influence they have exerted upon human thinking and living, it has been more hurtful than helpful. When it comes to presenting to mankind a philosophy of life that will help to solve man's hard problems and bring him comfort and hope, atheism has failed utterly. To substantiate these statements we may appeal to the testimony of the atheists themselves.

Romanes, a Former Atheist, on the Misery of Atheism. In a former chapter we related part of the story of the experience of Professor George J. Romanes who was an avowed atheist and materialist; but whose conversion from atheism to a positive Christian faith is now well known. After he became a Christian, he prepared material for a book which was issued under the title *Thoughts on Religion.* In that book he makes the following state-

ment: "Man's nature without God is thoroughly miserable. Some men are not conscious of the cause of this misery. This however does not prevent the fact of their being miserable. For the most part they conceal the fact as well as possible from themselves by occupying their minds with society, sports, frivolity of all kinds. Or, if intellectually inclined, with science, art, literature, business, etc. This however is but to fill the starving belly with husks."

"I know from experience," he continues, "the intellectual distractions of scientific research, philosophical speculation, and artistic pleasures; but am also well aware that even when all are taken together and well sweetened to taste, in respect of consequent reputation, means and social position, the whole concoction is but as high confectionery to a starving man. There is no finality to rest in, while disease and death are always standing in the background. I take it as unquestionably true that this whole negative side of the subject proves a vacuum in the soul of man which nothing can fill save faith in God."

The Sad Confession of Mark Twain. Take another statement from the *Autobiography* of Samuel Clemens, known also as Mark Twain, who openly declared that he had no vital faith in God. Here is his picture of the meaning of life:

"A myriad of men are born; they scramble for little mean advantages over each other; age creeps upon them and infirmities follow; shames and humiliations

bring down their prides and vanities. Those they love are taken from them, and the joy of life is turned to aching grief. The burden of pain, care, misery, grows heavier year by year. At length ambition is dead, pride is dead, vanity is dead; longing for release is in their place. It comes at last—the only unpoisoned gift earth ever had for them—and they vanish from a world where they were of no consequence, where they achieved nothing, where they were a mistake and failure and foolishness; where they left no sign that they have existed—a world that will lament them a day and forget them for ever."

Dr. Albertus Pieters, in his book, *Facts and Mysteries of the Christian Faith,* remarks about this statement: "It is a black picture, but it is a true outline of human life—if there is no God. As St. Paul says, 'To be without God is to be without hope in the world'." He then quotes that familiar utterance of Augustine, who himself was lifted out of a life of unbelief into a great life of Christian leadership, "O God, Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts find no rest until they rest in Thee," and adds, "That was the trouble with Mark Twain: he had not learned to find rest in God, and he found rest nowhere."

Charles Bradlaugh's Failure to Vindicate Atheism. Some years ago Charles Bradlaugh was the outstanding atheist in England. He was ever challenging the validity of the claims of Christianity. Down in one of the slums of London was a

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Christian minister by the name of Hugh Price Hughes. He was a real personality, engaged in the task of seeking to be used of God in redeeming the souls of men and women from sin and shame into the fellowship of God. London was ringing with the reports of the miracles of grace accomplished at his mission. People went there from all parts of the city. He was compelled to secure a larger hall. Mr. Bradlaugh became restless, as the papers published another human interest story of the lives transformed at the Mission.

So Charles Bradlaugh challenged Mr. Hughes to debate with him the subject of the validity of the claims of Christianity. London was interested. What would Mr. Hughes do? He immediately accepted the challenge, and in doing so added one of his own. He said in substance:

"Since we know, Mr. Bradlaugh, that 'a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still', and since the debate as a matter of mental gymnastics will not likely convert any one; I propose to you that we bring some concrete evidences of the validity of the claims of Christianity in the form of men and women who have been redeemed from lives of sin and shame by the influence of Christianity and by atheism. I will bring one hundred such men and women, and I challenge you to do the same.

"If you cannot bring one hundred, Mr. Bradlaugh, to match my hundred, I will be satisfied if you will bring fifty men and women who will stand and testify

that they have been lifted up from lives of shame by the influence of your atheistic teachings. If you cannot bring fifty, I challenge you to bring twenty people who will testify with shining faces, as my one hundred will, that they have a great new joy in a life of self-respect as a result of your atheistic teachings. If you cannot bring twenty, I will be satisfied if you bring ten. Nay, Mr. Bradlaugh, I challenge you to bring one, just one man or woman who will make such a testimony regarding the uplifting influence of your atheistic teachings. My redeemed men and women will bring an unanswerable proof to the saving power of Jesus Christ in the lives of those who have been redeemed from the slaveries of sin and shame. Perhaps, Mr. Bradlaugh, this will be the real demonstration of the validity of the claims of Christianity."

Again London was stirred. What would Mr. Bradlaugh do? For answer, Charles Bradlaugh, in great discomfiture and chagrin, publicly withdrew his challenge for the debate, and London smiled. If Mark Twain had lived six months with Hugh Price Hughes in that slum of London, where he would see squalor and poverty and want and sin, he would also have witnessed this marvellous miracle of divine grace repeated again and again, until it would have been utterly impossible for him to have written that tragic statement that revealed the paralysis of despair that shackled his soul.

Atheism Lacks Moral Dynamic. Thus we are driven to the truth of the statement of Dr. Leander S. Keyser, in his book, *A System of Christian Evi-*

dence, that "Atheism lacks moral dynamic. It destroys faith, and gives nothing in its stead. Morally and spiritually it has and knows no remedial system for the sickness of the soul. It saps the foundation of morality." We might multiply literally thousands of instances like that of Mr. Hughes in London. Take the outstanding cases of Father Damien and Mary Reed who gave their lives to the work among the lepers. It has been said that nothing has so thoroughly convinced people in Asia and Africa of the reality of the Christian teaching and the power of the Gospel of Christ to save as this devotion of Christians to the salvation of lepers. No self-seeking could be charged there. Moreover, thousands of lepers have been transformed, not only emancipated from the handicap of leprous bodies by the new treatment, but their immortal souls have been quickened by the glorious truth that in Christ Jesus they become children of the living God. Where will the atheist movement present one single trophy of such blessed transformations? Nowhere.

Moral Dynamic in Christianity Everywhere. Yonder is the work of Dr. Wilfred Grenfell in the Labrador country. With a devotion born of a faith in God and his redeeming love for men, that brilliant young London physician turned his back on the world's metropolis, with all of its allurements, and gave his life to a programme of saving character that included the whole life of that neglected

people, body, mind and spirit. The world knows the story of an utterly changed Labrador, and no sane man could study that programme in all of its details, with its schools and hospitals and churches, all exalting the religion of Jesus Christ as the one explanation of its achievements, its transformed homes and individual lives, without realising that it also is an undeniable demonstration of the validity of the claims of Christianity. The utter inability of the atheists to do anything of the kind is the constant evidence of their failure to bring a solution to the problems of mankind.

V

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD

A COLLEGE professor said to the members of his class in psychology: "Young gentlemen, think the wall." The young men looked in the direction he indicated and thought the wall, its substance, its hardness, its dimensions, its colour—they thought the wall. Then the professor said: "Now, young gentlemen, think that which thinks the wall." Involuntarily the members of the class closed their eyes, and thought of the nature of their self-conscious, invisible beings which possess the power to think and feel and will. We have noted in former chapters that this being is of the nature of spirit, something different from matter.

Our Experience of Human Personalities. Consider a room filled with people. The great realities in that room are not anything you can see or feel with the physical senses. The great realities are the invisible spirits gathered there. You should never say, "I have a soul." You should say: "I am a soul. I have a body, which is my tool, which I use in various activities along the lines of the media which I control." When two people engage

in conversation, it is not the voice of one talking to the ears of the other. It is one invisible spirit in communion with the other. The media of communication are the servants we control by the exercise of our wills. They are not our masters. Our consciousness witnesses to these facts.

We Know a Spirit's Presence by His Self-Revelation. We have often proved that the only way to know of a person's presence is by his self-revelation. A crowd was standing in front of a store in Chicago. They were looking at a figure of a man which apparently was lifeless. But the report was repeated that every twelve minutes he would move. After a few moments the man turned to the crowd and bowed himself out of the window. The self-revelation of the spirit left no doubt about his being alive, though he had the ability to stand motionless for awhile. Yet no one knew as yet what kind of a man he was. To know that would involve more self-revelation for some time, when we would gradually learn whether he was bright or dull, honest or dishonest, pure or impure, artistic or mediocre, religious or worldly, a strong character or easily influenced, and everything else that one could come in time to know about him. All this we know only as a result of his self-revelation of his nature as an invisible spirit.

We Know the Self-Revelations of Creative Spirits. On every side we behold man's creative thought in the things he has made. His inventive

genius is most marked when it reveals his thought as having conceived something that no man had thought of before, as the telephone, or phonograph. This originality of thought indicates a definite degree of independence in the thinking of the inventor, so that we recognise the distinctive character of his thought as thus revealed. In like manner men reveal the exercise of their wills by directing their actions or controlling their bodies or other mechanisms such as automobiles or airplanes. All of this self-revelation has been recognised as evidence of a self-conscious, thinking, volitional being which we call a personality. From our constant recognition of human personalities as a result of their self-revelations, we must argue from the similar self-revelations of the Creator's thought that he also is a spirit-personality.

God Must Also Be a Transcendent Personality. The only possible logical position to take, in the light of man's own experience, is that the Creator is also a spirit-personality. While His power far transcends that of man, yet He reveals the same kind of thought and purpose as man reveals. The self-revelations of the Creator make manifest the exercise on His part of thought, feeling and will, the constituent attributes of a spirit-personality. Alfred Russel Wallace, in his *Natural Selection,* says:

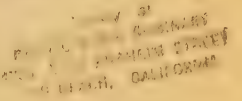
"Force is the product of mind. All force is probably will force. The human will is a power that

directs the action of forces stored up in the body. When therefore we have traced one force to its origin in our will, while we have no other knowledge of any other primary cause of force, it does not seem an improbable conclusion that all force may be will force; and that the whole universe is not merely dependent on, but actually is the will of higher intelligences, or of one supreme intelligence."

Since our experience testifies that back of the exercise of will is the purposive thought, we follow the conclusion of Wallace to the conviction that God is a spirit-personality revealing His will in the whole programme of creation.

Mechanistic Behaviourism Denies Personality. In the face of all the considerations presented in the foregoing chapters, the mechanistic and behaviouristic psychology mentioned in our opening chapter, denies the fact of personality and even denies the fact of consciousness in human beings, denies that there is any self to be conscious of its existence. The two schools are closely related and are practically one. Professor Leuba has been one of the leaders in the mechanistic school, while Dr. John B. Watson, author of *Behaviour,* is the champion of behaviourism.

The Destructive Character of These Teachings. Professor Earl Marlatt, of Boston University, in his monograph *Is There a Person?,* thus describes the "annihilating" process of these schools:



"In an unbroken surgical succession *the entities that give vitality to the universe* have been scientifically (?) cut out, until patient and surgeon alike are about to disappear. 'God' was the first to go, for the learned doctors finding nothing, insisted there had been nothing, merely 'much ado about nothing.' The 'soul' was the next to go. Overnight it became a memory, mentioned only by pious or poetic organisms too maladjusted to their environments to appreciate the superior revelations of behaviourism and positivism. And now 'consciousness' and 'persons' are on the table under the scalpel." Then he adds: "Fortunately for the universe there are a few souls left sufficiently aware of a 'felt-togetherness' that resents annihilation to let their 'language habits' function to the extent of protesting against such wanton vivisection."

When these theorists assert that God is the result of the imaginations of men, one naturally asks *how they explain away the evidence of intelligence and creative thought in nature before man existed?* There is only one answer. They are driven to the materialistic position of the atheist who, in denying intelligence in creation, must explain everything that now exists as being the result of aimless chance. We have discussed the unreasonableness of such a position in a former chapter, where we quoted Lord Kelvin in his assertion that "modern scientific men agree that such a view is utterly absurd." The fact to be emphasised is that the realm in which they carry on their theorising is too small

to be accepted in its relation to the vaster sphere of evidence of creative thought in nature.

Its Deplorable Moral Effects Condemn the View. We have repeatedly stressed the fact that truth is in order to life. That means that any teaching which effects the building of character must be tested by its effect upon man's moral nature. Concerning this mechanistic teaching, Professor C. A. Elwood, in *The Reconstruction of Religion,* holds that the results of their teachings would produce a "religionless world, a social world of uncertainties, destitute of enthusiasm and wisdom, reduced to the dead level of expediency." And Professor J. E. Bentley, in his monograph on *Mechanistic and Personalistic Psychology,* declares: "In such a régime moral and legal restrictions would suffer a breakdown, civilisation would utterly collapse through the decay of religious ideals and values." In fact, we are witnessing this tendency to moral laxity to-day, and it is a fair inference that the influence of behaviouristic psychology in the academic world is largely to blame for its presence.

Leaders Among the Personalistic Psychologists. One who would follow the subject in detail will be interested in the following books by recognised leaders in the field of personalistic psychology who refute the false teachings of the behaviourists:

Professor J. S. Moore, of Princeton, *The Foundations of Psychology.*

Professor A. C. Knudson, of Boston University, *The Philosophy of Personalism.*

Professor J. A. Leighton, of Ohio State University, *Man and the Cosmos.*

Professor W. S. Athearn, of Boston University, *Introduction to the Study of Mind.*

In these books the student will find many references which he may trace in a larger field of discussion.

New Discoveries Disturbing to the Behaviourists. In addition to the above, we call attention to a statement by Professor A. C. Wyckoff, Professor of Religious Psychology in the Biblical Seminary of New York, whose keen and discriminating writings we commend as always helpful. In an article in *The Biblical Review* for January, 1928, Professor Wyckoff says: "Just as the behaviourists imagined they were within reach of victory, proposing to get on without any personality anywhere; other psychologists were making a study of insects and animals with results disturbing to the behaviourists." He tells us: "The Peckhams in their study of wasps tell of their surprising habit variations, *which are far removed from what rigid reflexes would require.*" Also that Professor Wolfgang Kohler, in his study of chimpanzees discovered that *"intelligence functions in their mental operations, reorganising the whole psychological self before any attempt is made to solve a natural or puzzle prob-*

lem, in which the use of tools in securing food is involved or escape from captivity is accomplished."

Further he reports that Professor Kurt Koffka, in *The Growth of the Mind,* finds that "the mind of the child shows evidence of intelligence controlling every part of perception." In fact he insists that "every perception is in reality a conception." Professor Wyckoff declares: "Theism is established upon a solid psychological foundation from which no present-day psychology can dislodge it."

Personality Transcends Limitations. There is another school of thought demanding attention. Its adherents do not deny the existence of God, but declare that God is a principle, not a personality. They tell us that to think of God as personality is to involve Him in limitations, whereas the infinite God cannot be thought of as limited. They tell us a principle is unlimited and infinite in its scope and nature. But they are guilty of the same fallacy in both of these statements. God is infinite but not absolute. He is conditioned, as when a creator is involved in his creation. He is immanent in all His creation; yet He is transcendent beyond the limitations of that creation. We are ever reasoning from our own experience. Man's spirit-personality possesses this same power to transcend beyond his physical limitations.

A speaker is everywhere present in the room filled with the people whom he addresses. He is

in real communion with each of them. Recently the writer was called to the telephone and informed that Boston wished to speak to him. A thousand miles were annihilated in a moment. We were in each other's presence as surely as if we were standing in the same room together. From our own experience we appreciate the transcendent power of the Creator, who, though conditioned by His creation, is not limited to its physical limitations.

A Principle Is Not a Self-Conscious Intelligence. The vital difference between a principle and a personality is in the realm of self-conscious intelligence. A principle is not self-conscious. But we cannot conceive of an organising, creating, directing power without self-consciousness. Moreover, a universal principle becomes significant only as it is embodied in the personal relationships with which men are familiar. We could never have thought of a principle of purity apart from an intelligent personality who lives a pure life. In both personality and principle we find them taking on meaning for us only when they enter the realm of our personal consciousness. A principle is a law, but the lawgiver must be an intelligent personality. Our experience demands this. A principle is a rule of action, like the principle of righteousness; whereas personality embodies that principle of righteousness in conduct and character. A principle is a quality of character, like selfishness or unselfishness; but it is only an attribute of intelligent being.

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God is more than an attribute of being or a quality of character. All of our study thus far compels the conclusion that He is the infinite personality in the universe, the supreme self-conscious, living, dynamic creator and ruler of all worlds.

The Problem of God's Self-Existence. The atheist presents another problem to the believer in God. We are accustomed to say that every effect must have a cause, which is true in our experience. Then the atheist asks us who made God? What cause explains God's existence? It is a fair question. Our answer is along the lines of the findings of science. We have noted that science insists that we must think of all life, in so far as we have any knowledge of life, as pointing to its source in antecedent life. We recognise God as the living source of life on this planet. Hence we are compelled to think of the explanation of God's existence in one of two ways. One is to think of a living being back of God who created God, and then to think of another being further back who in turn created the creator of God. Thus we must try to imagine an endless series of living beings, each the creator of the next. That is to say, we have here a conception of endless life.

The other view thinks of God as self-existent, living for ever. Either view involves the conception of endless life. One is as easy for the human mind to conceive as the other. Hence the next question is as to which is the more reasonable view to accept?

Have we any reasons for choosing between them? We believe we have.

Science Points to One Supreme Being. Professor Romanes asserts that science makes polytheism impossible, since the uniformity of all law and the solidarity of the universe point to one supreme Creator and Ruler. In harmony with this assertion, we recall the strong statement of Immanuel Kant, "It is impossible to contemplate the fabric of the world without recognising the certain manifestation of the hand of God in the perfections of its correlations. All things which set forth reciprocal harmonies in nature must be bound together in a single Existence on which they collectively depend." That is to say, we have the evidence of one mind moving in the sustaining laws and directing power of the universe. There is a sense of poise as well as power. It is this conviction which has led the outstanding giants in the thinking world to agree that the reasonable position is to believe in a self-existent God as the ever-living personality whose creative thought and power are self-revealed to men in His vast universe of worlds.

VI

FACTS WHICH INDICATE A GOD OF LOVE

IN our discussion thus far we have presented reasons for believing in the living God as a self-existing personality and the intelligent creator of the universe. There are those who are ready to agree with our findings up to this point who, however, are not ready to believe that He is a God of love and is vitally concerned in the welfare of mankind. It is to this phase of the subject that we now turn. We have developed at length the fact of the self-revelation of spirit-personality, and the correlative fact that we must judge as to the nature of the invisible spirit by the facts which come to light in such self-revelation.

Laws Are the Expression of the Will of the Law-maker. We know that all man-made laws are the expression of the will of the man or men who made those laws. On every side in all nature we discover a vast realm of laws. Man has not made these laws. He has discovered them, and he finds them involving every department of the whole creation, not only in the realm of material things, but also in the realms of the psychical, the intellectual and

the spiritual. We noted in a former chapter that our experience led us to the conviction that back of all physical forces and material entities is the power of the will. We quoted Alfred Russel Wallace as declaring that the logical inference from our own experience at this point leads to the conclusion that all power, at the last analysis, is will power. Hence we must conclude that the laws which we have discovered in all creation are the expression of the will of the Creator.

The Will of God Through His Laws Sustains the Universe. Dr. Jacob Schurmann, former president of Cornell University, in his suggestive monograph on *God,* declares that unless the sustaining power revealed in the laws that are found in all creation should be maintained every instant of time, they would cease to function and the material aggregations found in suns and planets would suddenly disintegrate, and chaos would follow. He declares that the will of the Creator must sustain His laws by unceasing purpose. Thus it is that we find the universe poised, with every particle of matter obedient to the laws that control its actions, whether in the tiny electron or in the rolling stars. In this tremendous fact we have the first evidence of benevolence in the thought of the Creator.

Benevolence Is Evident in the Laws of Nature. It is to be emphasised that every law in nature is a good law, because it brings blessings, and only blessings, when it is obeyed. That is to say, the

love of the Creator is revealed in every law in nature since its obedience brings only blessings. It is evident that it is the will of the law-giver that His laws shall be obeyed, because going along with every law is the penalty which follows failure to obey the same. The penalty is the law's defence. We must realise that it is the love of the value which the law is intended to preserve that must enforce the penalty when it is disobeyed. The law of purity is maintained because of the love of purity on the part of the Law-giver, and His love of purity must be a flame against impurity everywhere and always. The law of health would fail of its purpose apart from the love of health, and unless the violation of the law of health were accompanied by warnings and penalties, men would never learn that obedience to the laws of health is the only way to possess its blessings.

Men Bring Upon Themselves the Penalties of Failure to Obey Law. We often hear the common expression that men break the laws of God. It is an incorrect statement, due to a misapprehension of what takes place when we disobey God's laws. When men refuse to accept God's teachings in His laws that obedience always brings blessing, it is perfectly clear that we bring upon ourselves the penalties of our disobedience. When we do this, it is pitifully superficial and unjust to deny the love of God for allowing the penalties which follow dis-

obedience of His laws to carry out their effect in our lives. Love must defend the law.

Man Breaks His Own Life at the Point of Disobedience. When man disobeys God's laws, he does not break that law. God is in His law, and man cannot break it. What man does when he disobeys the law is to break his own life, his own character, at the point of disobedience. You cannot break God's law of health, for God is in it and maintains it, revealing His love of health in the penalty that follows failure to obey it. What you do is to break your health. Yet some men refuse to believe in the love of God because God does not allow them to ignore the laws of health and not suffer the consequences, for which they themselves are responsible. If a man should insist that he is not responsible for his conduct, as the mechanistic psychologists would, let him go into a court of justice and make that plea. The universal consciousness of mankind repudiates that plea. It is when men shall learn to love the laws of health as God loves them, observing the requirements involved eagerly as well worth while, mankind will enjoy the priceless blessings of universal health.

You cannot break God's law of purity, for God loves purity too much to fail to maintain its values. You break your own purity when you disobey that law. No argument is necessary to reinforce this statement. It is self-evident in all human experience. The law is God's guide to the way of bless-

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ings which purity always brings when its law is obeyed. Yet again some men, though responsible for their disobedience and realising the consequences, deny the love of God because of the sufferings which their own folly has brought upon them, and sometimes upon others who must share their sufferings. Thousands of men and women have learned the truth that has made them free, and enjoy the blessings that follow obedience, rejoicing that God was faithful to His laws, with their penalties; for they realise how priceless their values are to mankind. This is the meaning of the statement that "the law is a school-master to lead us to Christ."

Instances of the Love of God Revealed in Nature. Let us note some of the evidences of the love of God revealed in nature, which includes human nature. There are the conditions which make life possible on this planet. First of all is the fact of the atmosphere which surrounds our earth, without which life, as we know it, would be impossible. Wallace, in his book *Man's Place in the Universe,* sets forth the view that our earth is the only sphere that is inhabited by living beings, as we know them, because no other has an atmosphere like ours, with its conditions essential to life. Its most striking feature is oxygen. Although oxygen combines most easily with many substances, its great surplus is an indescribable boon to man.

Another unique feature is the abundance of

water, so essential to physical life. It is also necessary for the cultivation of the soil, in the growth of all vegetation and food for animals and men. Most useful also in so many activities of men along hygienic, mechanical and industrial lines. Then there are the almost unbelievable co-ordinations between the needs of living creatures and the food they must have. It is a striking fact that wherever you find certain species of animals, there you will find the particular food that they require. Moreover, we should stress the fact that the laws of nature can be depended upon to bring forth harvest according to the seed that has been planted. Too many take this as a matter of course, without stopping to appreciate how much it means that we may rely upon this law with absolute certainty. When we plant wheat we reap wheat. It is a law which works in every realm of life, emphasising the reliability of God's laws, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Man's Dependence Upon God Is Thus Made Evident. Some years ago the writer was invited to a home for dinner. The host asked me to say grace. After the blessing was asked and our thanks expressed for the gifts of God spread before us, he said rather bluntly: "Really now, I don't see much point to that; for I provided this meal myself." For reply we asked: "Had you ever stopped to think that if seed-time and harvest should fail once on the whole earth, half of the people would be

dead before another harvest? And had it occurred to you that if seed-time and harvest should fail two years in succession over the entire planet, every one living would be dead before another harvest?" Evidently astonished, he admitted that he had never thought of such a possibility. Then we suggested that he was very much mistaken in saying that he had furnished the meal set before us. God had given him his own life and his power to get gain. God had put life into grain and animal which we were using for food, which he could never do.

We suggested that he had been a labourer together with God, by entering into God's laws for the provision of our needs. Then we said: "If any one should give you something, you would say 'Thank you!' and if the gifts should be repeated two or three times a day, you would say 'Thank you' each time." He quickly agreed. "Now, you understand why we say 'Thank you' to God each time we receive His blessings." To this he exclaimed: "Why, that is just being decent, to say nothing of being intelligently thankful!" Thus we recognise the love of God revealed in all of His laws, especially in those involved in His provision for man's needs.

Man Is Not Sufficient Unto Himself. Our thought leads us to the higher point of stressing man's need in the realm of his moral and spiritual life. We must frankly face the testimony of history that man has not made promising progress in

trying to improve his moral condition in his own strength, which has ever proved to be his own weakness. The Greeks climbed to as noble heights two thousand years ago in athletics, in æsthetics, in literary culture, in philosophical skill, as man has ever attained; but they failed for the lack of moral fibre, without which there never can be stability of civilisation or permanency of greatness.

In his book, *Social Environment and Moral Progress,* Wallace declares that, "while man has made remarkable progress in certain directions of material advancement and intellectual attainment, yet from the standpoint of morals man is to-day elevated very little above the earliest conditions that history records." Guesses about prehistoric man, especially about his moral experiences, are not scientific. In this survey let us realise that we must take the whole race into account, on all continents and all islands of the seas, as we discuss their moral conditions. The great question is not how far the modern self-binding, self-thrashing harvester surpasses Ruth's sickle. It is as to how far the womanhood of to-day surpasses the womanhood of Ruth. The point is that man's needs in the moral realm are as vitally real as in the physical realm.

May We Expect God to Meet Man's Spiritual Needs? Since God has met all of man's needs in the physical realm, is it reasonable to suppose that He will meet our needs in the realms of the mind

and spirit? It is evident from the very character of man's constitution that the Creator intended him to rise above the level of the physical and develop his higher capacities in his intellectual, moral and spiritual being. John Fiske, in his little book, *Through Nature to God,* makes the statement that "evolution has no further need of physical development, and all progress must now be made through the psychical and spiritual; hence *the stupendous momentum of the cosmic forces has all along been tending toward the spiritual perfection of humanity.*" How can man realise this spiritual perfection?

Man Needs More Light Than Nature Can Furnish. One thing is certain in the light of human history. With all the advancement of science, with all the material progress of men in mechanical invention, with all the cultivation of the human intellect, there is not sufficient light to be found in nature to solve the problem of the human soul in securing a victory over the power of sin and in the building of victorious character. Man's need of light to meet his spiritual needs is evident and persistent. God has met all the lower needs of men, as we have noted. Therefore the only logical conclusion must be that our God of love will not fail to meet the highest needs of His creatures, who are more than creatures, in that we possess the very same spirit-nature manifest in the self-revelations of the Creator. In the future chapters we shall

consider the grounds for our confidence that God has thus revealed to men the light which has proved sufficient to solve every human problem, individual and collective.

Nature Reveals Redemptive Processes in the Thought of God. One more fact which reveals the love of God in nature should be mentioned in this connection. That is the fact that a redemptive power is at work in nature. If you cut a tree, instantly healing forces are set to work to heal up the hurt. Thousands of plants, to be found in all parts of the habitable globe, contain healing properties which man has discovered and is using to offset the attack of disease and to bring healing to the injured bodies of men. This fact that nature is filled with redemptive potencies gives us a double confirmation of the conviction that our God of love will not fail to meet the needs of men in bringing spiritual healing for the moral disease of sin. At this point man needs not only the revelation of light but also of power that will enable him to break the shackles of sin and rise into newness of life where he will find all of God's moral and spiritual laws to be perfect laws of liberty, and will learn to love the laws that conserve the noblest qualities of finest manhood and womanhood. It is this revelation of redeeming love that God has made to men which will demand our study in the remaining chapters of our discussion.

VII

WHY A GOD OF LOVE ALLOWS SIN AND SUFFERING

SOME years ago a lady came to me at the close of a church service, dressed in mourning. Handing me a card she informed me that she had recently moved into the neighbourhood and would be glad to have a call. In a few days the call was made. She told of the recent death of her husband, and that she had come to live with her daughter, who was present. Suddenly the daughter exclaimed: "I can never again believe in the love of God!"

On being asked why she made such a statement, she replied: "Why, He let my father die!"

We asked if she believed that God was directly responsible for her father's death.

"Why, certainly! Don't you?"

"No, I am not so sure of that," was my rejoinder, adding: "Let me tell you a story to illustrate my thought about it."

God Not Directly Responsible for Man's Sickness or Death. The story was of a lawyer who was a member of our church who had been overworking, and knew it. One day we overheard his

father warning him that he was killing himself. He declared that he could not get from under his burden for the time; but would do so soon and take a vacation. After a few weeks he went to St. Louis and took a steamer down the Mississippi river for New Orleans. On the way he contracted malarial fever, which developed into typhoid. They took him to Pass Christian, where he died. Then we asked the daughter: "Do you think God was directly responsible for that man's death?"

Instead of a reply, she said: "Why, that is what my father did!" Then she hastened to add: "But he did it with good motives, in a just cause."

To which I replied: "While we may not question your father's good intentions, let us be just to God." Then I discussed with them the facts mentioned in the preceding chapter regarding the evidence that the love of God is revealed in all His laws, since they bring only blessings when obeyed.

Could Not God Prevent Our Troubles? "But could not God have prevented it?" she asked.

"How?" we inquired.

"Why, just prevented it."

"Let us think what that would mean. God would allow your father to fail to obey the law of health in his own case, and then prevent the consequences. Of course, if He did so with your father, He must do so with every one else who violates the law. How would that do? Would that be a good thing?"

"Mercy, no!" she exclaimed. "If He did it for every one, that would mean chaos!"

"Exactly, and God must honour His laws so long as He maintains a moral universe." She was silent.

God Did Not Leave Us in Our Sins and Sufferings. Then we continued: "You must realise that God, in His great love, did not leave us to suffer the penalties of our own disobedience without help. He has sent His Son to be our guide out of the ways of waywardness into which we have gone, to be our physician, to heal our disease of sin, and to be our Redeemer to buy us back out of the slaveries of sin and self into the glorious liberties of the children of God. That is what the love of God has done for disobedient men."

She rose from her chair with tears in her eyes, saying she had never realised the love of God before, and she would pray for forgiveness because of her rebellious spirit.

Why Did God Allow Sin to Enter Human Lives? But men everywhere are asking why God allowed sin to enter human lives. Why was it necessary? The answer is that it was necessary for God to allow men to choose whether they would obey or disobey His laws. Unless God made man with this moral responsibility, we would have been no higher in the moral scale than the lower animals, incapable of moral appreciation, as was noted in a

former chapter, and therefore incapable of building character in righteousness.

The Principle of Evil Is Different From the Act of Sin. While it was necessary for God to allow man to choose between obedience and disobedience of God's laws, yet it was not necessary that man should have chosen to disobey the law. He might have chosen to obey God, and to have enjoyed the blessings which obedience always brings. Had the first man obeyed the law, sin would not have entered into human life in so far as he was concerned. But if he had obeyed, then the next man would have had the responsibility of choosing whether he would obey or disobey. And if all men had obeyed down to your life and mine, then we would have faced this crisis test, and the destiny of humanity would have been in our hands, at the point of the entrance of sin into the lives of men through our failure to obey. The principle of evil involves the possibility of man's choice. The act of sin came with the actual disobedience.

God Is Responsible for Making Men as We Are. We must emphasise the fact that God accepted the responsibility for making us the kind of men that we are. He knew of all the sin and suffering that would follow man's disobedience; yet in His wisdom He decided that in the end it would be better to make us as we are than not to do so. He saw, what we must never forget, that man's struggle for character is the highest condition of moral victory

and spiritual values. Only as we have this nobler endowment which lifts us to the highest levels of all God's creatures, has He made it possible for us to rise to still higher levels in the rising scale of living creatures until we are lifted into fellowship with God Himself as His children. And mark well the further fact that in the light of the experiences of ten thousand people who have come through that struggle, by the help of God's grace, even through the sufferings that all have tasted, into the place of peace, into the place of the enjoyment of the blessings of obedience, God has been vindicated in His programme of allowing men to be free moral agents in the building of character.

Man Thought He Could Get Along Without God. The point to emphasise in man's sin is that he thought he could get along without God, and would be better off than if he continued in fellowship with God by obedience. Dr. Fosdick recently said: "Many people misrepresent the importance of believing in God, because they think that a man who disbelieves in God has gotten rid of God. But God is so necessary and so unescapable that it takes more than disbelieving in Him to be rid of Him." That misapprehension explains man's first decision to disobey God's will for our daily lives. The supreme fact which man needs to learn is that the highest peak he can reach in realising his noblest development of character is the place of fellowship with God in righteousness, in holiness, in truth and

love, which is realised through the desire to find the blessings that come through obedience.

God's Programme Involves a Discipline of Chastening for Men. We noted in a former chapter the evidence of redemptive forces in nature. We must also know that God has a redemptive programme in the realm of character-building. That programme involves a process of chastening men so that they may be cleansed from the results of sin. The full meaning of this fact involves the very significant truth that God has entered into the realm of man's suffering and chastening, sharing with His human children their hard experiences with a divine sympathy. Chastening is not punishing for the sake of inflicting punishment. Chastening is for the sake of pointing the way of blessing by obedience. The prime necessity for us is that we shall realise that the love of God is in every process of chastening in our experiences. Just as the goldsmith places the ore into the flame to burn away the dross and purify the gold, so God allows the penalties that follow disobedience to work out their results in order that men may learn the way of blessing through obedience.

Strength Comes Only Through Struggles. On every side we find antagonistic forces that compel men to develop strength through struggle. It has been said that the snow line marks the development of the strongest civilisation. That is to say, men have found the vigour and rigour necessary to

provide the necessities of life to be real blessings, whereas the lassitude of the tropics has never tended to quicken eager enterprise. This fact we must always keep in mind as obtaining just as surely in the realm of spiritual growth. We know that we must cultivate self-denial in order to self-mastery. Many experiences that we count hardships should not be so considered at all, for they are really blessings involved in the development of character. Innocence is purity untempted. Virtue is purity tempted and victorious. It is such truth that should lead us to see that God overrules many of our sins and failures to our ultimate good, when we are ready to accept His redemptive programme for us. The earthly father who claims to love his wayward children so much that he will never discipline them proves that he does not realise the true love that goes with parental responsibility. In other words, he really does not love his children and lacks the courage of that fidelity which chastens in order to save.

God Participates in the Disciplines and Struggles of Men. We said that God has a part in the hard experiences of His children. This truth is of supreme importance in our appreciation of the love of God. Professor A. Seth Pringle-Pattison, of Edinburgh University, in his recent book, *The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy,* says:

"We must interpret God in the light of our most

profound experience. The omnipotence of God is not the attribute of irresistible force; but the all-compelling power of goodness and love enlightening the grossest darkness and melting the hardest heart. The ultimate idea of God is not of a pre-existent creator, but of an eternal redeemer of the world. This is the very life of God. It is the power to transform the very meaning of the past and to transmute every loss into gain. This is the real omnipotence of atoning love, and it is no far-off mystery of theology; but the very texture of our human experience. This is the open secret of the universe, a God who lives in the perpetual giving of Himself, who shares the life of His finite creatures, bearing in and with them the burden of their sinful wanderings and sorrows, without which they cannot be made perfect."

A Very Human Illustration of This Truth. The following story is told by Mr. S. D. Gordon, who knew personally the people mentioned. Some years ago a school teacher in a Connecticut village stopped at the home of one of his boys and asked if he were ill. The father assured him that the boy was well. The teacher reported that the boy had not been at school for three days, and he thought he might be ill. The teacher had scarcely left when the boy appeared. His father said: "Phil, your teacher has been here. Your mother and I are greatly grieved. We trusted you, Phil. You have been living a lie for three days. Let us pray about it." There was no word of anger, only the feeling

of a great sorrow, as that father poured out his soul to God for his boy. Phil saw himself, in the sight of God, as he had not stopped to do while he was deceiving his parents. It was much harder than physical punishment would have been.

Sin Always Means Suffering in Bearing the Penalty. Then his father said: "My boy, there is a law that wherever there is sin, there is suffering, and that suffering is not restricted to the sinner. If it could be, that would be bad enough; but others always suffer also. Moreover parental love always requires discipline as a result of sin. You will go to the attic and stay there three days, the same time you lived the lie. We will put your bed up there and take up your meals."

That night the mother said to the father, about 11 o'clock: "Why are you not asleep?"

He replied: "How did you know I am not asleep?" At 2 o'clock the father slipped out of bed and took his pillow and went up to his boy.

The moon was shining upon the boy's face, which was wet with tears. His eyes were wide open. Not a word was said, as the father got into bed with his boy, and they were soon in each others' arms. After awhile they went to sleep. The second night and the third night the same experience was repeated. At the end of three days that boy was so changed that thereafter he was always strong where he had been weak.

One thing he understood clearly, that was the

love that filled his father's heart which made luminous the trying discipline, trying for both of them. This illustrates God's chastening in order to victory over sin. A blessed fellowship was established between that father and son ever after. Would that every man might see that God's programme is one of love and always love!

A Great Sufferer Glorifies God in Peace. Some years ago a child of God was a great sufferer from spinal trouble. She lived in a little room marked by poverty. One could not be at her bedside very long without noting how she cringed with pain as she quietly suffered. Yet by her bed was a little table on which was an open Bible, and her face was always shining like the face of an angel, as she told every one who came to her how good God was to her.

One day she told us that before she was afflicted she was just a butterfly, living in the froth of a superficial social life, with no vital concern for her spiritual welfare. Not until she was afflicted did she realise how cheap that sort of life was. Then she caught the vision of the redeeming love of God in Christ, and she thanked the Lord because of the days in which she had been afflicted. In the midst of physical pain she had a wonderful spiritual victory. Let us realise that while God is sympathetic with our physical sufferings, he is far more concerned about our spiritual welfare.

Another Experience Where the Vision Brought

Comfort and Strength. Another experience of a different sort illustrates the truth equally well. In one of the churches to which we ministered some years ago a child of God told us of a blessed experience that had come to her recently. She had felt a nearness to God such as she had never known. Her soul was filled with a great joy such as the world could not give and could not take away. Not many weeks later we saw in the morning paper that the business in which her husband was engaged had gone into bankruptcy, and that there were suspicions of dishonesty directed against the members of the firm in view of the way the business had been transacted. One could not say much beyond going and staying awhile to show our sympathy and pray for divine help.

A few weeks later she came to us and said: "Some of my friends to whom I had told my experience of that special blessing have been telling me that this terrible trial is a test of my faith. Do you think so?"

Before we could answer, she continued: "I do not think so. I believe that my heavenly Father saw this awful thing coming. In His loving wisdom He did not deem it best to take it out of my way. Therefore He drew me closer so that when it did come, I would have grace sufficient to bear it. That is my explanation."

"Oh, yes," we replied, "surely that is *the* explanation." Think what that meant! In the

moment of her keenest anguish, greater than the sorrow that comes in the bereavement of death, when there is only the memory of a good name to cherish, that woman's life was filled with a consciousness of the love of God bathing her soul with a sense of His sufficient grace, carrying her through her time of trial into a perfectly splendid triumph. Was there ever a more splendid experience than that to illustrate the way in which the love of God is in and through all of the experiences of His children when they are responsive to the truth?

VIII

GOD REVEALING HIMSELF TO MEN

IN the previous chapters we have noted the facts in nature which make it evident that the Creator has met the needs of all of His creatures below man, and that He has met the physical needs of mankind. We have also noted the love of the law-maker as revealed in all law. Furthermore we have noted the evidence of a redemptive programme in nature. Therefore we have only one answer to the question as to whether it is reasonable to expect that God will meet man's highest needs. The answer must be that it is not only reasonable to expect it, but it would be unreasonable and illogical not to do so. It further follows that since man's highest needs are moral and spiritual, in meeting those needs God will give men light on the problems of the human soul.

All Revelation Is Teaching. We have noted that man has been taught that the way of blessing is the way of obedience to the laws of God. Also that the laws of God express His will. Therefore man needs to know the laws of God in the realm of moral and spiritual culture, since those laws express His will for men in the building of character. All

revelation is teaching. Hence we note one of the principles in the science of Pedagogy is that teaching must be adapted to the capacity of those taught. If God is to be scientific in His teaching of His will, by His usual process of self-revelation, He will adapt that self-revelation to the capacities and conditions of men.

God Conveys Ideas to Men As Men Do to Each Other. Professor Bosworth, of Oberlin, asserts that we must recognise the reasonableness of believing that God conveys ideas to us just as we do to each other. The divine invisible Spirit communicates with human invisible spirits along the same lines of communication of which we are aware. We have come to know in our day that human minds may communicate ideas without the spoken word.

Some years ago I saw two small twin boys playing together suddenly stop and look at each other, and one said: "All right, let's do it." They got up and went out. I looked with surprise at their father, to whom I was talking. He told me that experience often occurred. He had seen them look at each other without saying a word, with an understanding look which signified that the same idea had occurred to them at the same moment, and proceed to act on the suggestion. Similar instances are given by specialists in the realm of psychics. Thus we have the scientific basis in experience for

the conviction that God may communicate with men without the use of the spoken word.

Man's Receptive Capacity Limits God's Revelation. Man's receptive capacity must determine the degree to which God can reveal His truth to men. Pedagogy also tells us that a lesson is never really taught until it is learned by the pupil. When Henry M. Stanley was in the jungle of Africa, the pigmies asked him where he came from and how he got there. He had exhausted their meagre vocabulary, which contained no words for ocean or ship. Hence he was unable to convey to them an idea of those things of which they never had an idea. It took a long time before he could teach them about a large body of water on which large boats came from one land to another. Just so it has been with God's revelation of truth to men.

Therefore God has had to wait a long time before he could convey to men the fulness of truth regarding His will in moral and spiritual growth into righteousness and loving-kindness, as men learned of their relation to God and to each other, in order to secure the blessings of obedience to those divine laws which point the way of fellowship with God. Through the centuries God was pressing upon the receptive minds of men His self-revelations of truth, but the vision was blurred. Men have testified their consciousness of a great urge within them that was not of their own choosing, and of their inability to grasp its significance

fully. Hence the teaching was always partial and tentative.

"Revelation" Means to Draw Back the Veil. "Revelation" means to draw back the veil, and God has been drawing back the veil in every realm just as fast as man has been ready to receive something more of the revelations of God. We know full well that man is finite, and that his receptive capacity is therefore limited. Moreover, man's preconceptions and prejudices, developed through various experiences, make it more difficult to catch the vision of truth that is contrary to his current ideas. Hence he is liable to distort the revelation until it becomes imperfect and incorrect. This has been true both in the realm of physical realities, as well as in that of spiritual realities. Civilisation has progressed in the degree to which men have caught the vision of the truth in both material and spiritual realms, and have learned that success in its highest meaning comes when men obey the laws of God which they have discovered and have come to realise as conditions to man's best development.

Men Are Asking How to Obey the Laws of Electricity. We stressed the fact in a former chapter that man did not make the laws of nature. He has discovered them just to the extent that he has been ready to receive the revelation of them. A wise teacher always encourages his pupils to discover things for themselves. This God has done all along. God had electricity in His universe all

the time; but He could not give it to men because they were slow to discover it, although He had been revealing its presence through the centuries. Thales, of Miletus, long centuries ago caught a glimpse of it; but his fellows were sceptical, and God had to wait. Men felt the urge of this mysterious power, but there was no clear vision. Then William Gilbert and Stephen Gray saw something definite, and were followed rapidly by Franklin, Faraday, Volta and Galvani, and a growing list of modern students, who are startling the world every year by the announcements of new discoveries.

Let us realise how profound is the fact that men have come to realise that *progress is to be made in increasing knowledge of electricity just to the extent that men learn to obey its laws more fully.* Hence this is the supreme question which they are asking. Consider Marconi giving time day and night in this effort to learn how he may obey the law of electricity more fully and secure the use of its power beyond anything yet known. And one day a vision! Wireless telegraphy! That is the way it came. That is the only way it could come. Not only to learn how to obey the law, but then to obey it with absolute fidelity in obedience.

Obedience in Every Realm the Condition of Power. This very familiar experience regarding the necessity of obedience to the law of electricity as a condition to possessing the use of its power

must be recognised and accepted by all men as a universal law of God applying to every realm of truth and power. Moreover it is very evident that this same condition has largely determined man's more or less imperfect knowledge of the truth when that truth involves conduct and life. God speaks to men in the spiritual realm, exactly as He has in the material realm, saying: "Obey My law in this realm, and you may have My power just as surely as you may have it in any other realm."

In the light of this universal law, which bears upon the fact that *man has been slow to discover the spiritual laws of God, because he has not been eager to obey them,* we see how luminous is that declaration of the greatest of all Teachers: "If any man is willing to do his will, he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God." We quickly see that there is nothing arbitrary or whimsical in that utterance. It is simply the statement of the law which is universal in its application to every realm of knowledge and power.

God Has Ever Sought Men to Interpret Him Truly to Mankind. That was an up-to-date scientific utterance made long ago by a man of prophetic insight: "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in behalf of the man whose heart is perfect toward him." It was exactly what we have just been saying. Wherever a man was ready to stop and think, which so few do, to inquire into the meaning

of what he saw and felt in the realm of the laws that are involved in life as applied to the building of character, God has always been eager to give to that man all the truth he could take and more.

Moses was such a man, and God crowded in upon Moses all that he could take and more. The Apostle Paul referred to several such men in his address to those Stoic philosophers at Athens, when he put the fact into a suggestive phrase, saying they were "feeling after God, if haply they might find him." Such an one was Zoroaster, and God crowded in upon Zoroaster all that he could take and more; and so with Buddha and Confucius, and so with Amos and Hosea, and with Isaiah and Jeremiah. They caught new visions of God and enlarged men's ideas of the way to live as the years passed.

Men Believed the Truth Because of Its Moral Dynamic. The universal law already emphasised applied all the way along. Men never convinced their fellows that they had found the truth except in so far as it was demonstrated as having power in the life—only as men realised in their own experience that the truth had transforming power, power to break their shackles of sin and bring them into peace with God, by way of obedience to His will set forth in the teachings of seer and prophet. Unless there was a moral dynamic in the teaching, thus proved by its emancipating power, it soon fell by the way as inadequate. Just to claim that their

teachings were from God never went very far, for false teachers made the same claim. Only as men found the teachings to have a compelling constraint upon honest hearts and consciences, leading them to forsake their sins and seek the fellowship of God, were they ready to accept the teachers as men sent from God.

These Tests Apply to the Leaders of All Religions. Inevitably the law has universal application. The teachings of all religions must be tested by it. The final question regarding any moral precept must be: "How does it work in the life?" *Take, for example, the place accorded to womanhood* among the different people on the planet. No civilisation can rise above the level attained by its womanhood. Perhaps there is no more practical suggestion than this when we approach a valid test of the worth of the teachings of any religion touching the principles that make for social health in the life of the family or the individual. Any one familiar with the teachings of the various religions about womanhood, and the practices which follow, can quickly determine for himself how far these teachings and practices will make for the uplift of humanity. And the point to keep in mind is that such teachings reveal the degree to which these leaders and devotees of these religions believe they have discovered the mind and will of God for their lives.

Some Effects of the Religio-Philosophy of Rein-

carnation. Or consider some of the serious results of the teaching of the religio-philosophy of the Hindus and Buddhists known as reincarnation and transmigration of souls. One of the results of this teaching is the prohibition against killing any living creature, because that living thing is a reincarnation, possibly of a former human being. Hence throughout the Orient, where these faiths are dominant, an economic problem has developed which threatens economic suicide. The land is not producing sufficient food for man and beast. If man could use meat food, the problem would be solved, but he dare not kill any animals that would serve for food. Not only so, but he must share his food with them. Millions of people never have food enough, and millions of animals are anæmic for lack of food, and are not able to earn by labour sufficient food. First in order as sacred is the cow, then the monkey, third the bird. All these help themselves to whatever food is in sight without being prevented. The leaders of those peoples confess the serious character of the crisis, and the people are asking: "Can God will this for us?"

Some years ago the writer was in India. One day, in conversation with some Hindu students, he was asked the question: "Why do you Christians eat meat?" It was evident that the students considered this practice indefensible. For answer we replied that we eat meat because it is right to do so. In proof of that statement we called their attention

to the fact that in the northern section of the planet the only food provided by nature is meat food, fish, whale blubber and other animal food. Then we stressed the fact that when meat food is the only food furnished by nature, no man dare say that it is wrong to eat meat. Not only so, but we urged further that any religion that could not be a universal religion could not be the true religion; and that any religion that teaches it is wrong to eat meat cannot be a universal religion for the reason already stated, as it could not be accepted in those regions where only meat food is found.

The students were silent. It was evident they had never thought of these facts. One must realise again that these teachings and practices indicate how far the leaders and people of these religions believe they have discovered the mind and will of God for their daily lives.

History Reveals Men Longing for Clearer Truth About God. Through the centuries men have placed themselves on record as longing for more light on the way of peace and victory in human life. All this was proof that their knowledge of God was incomplete and unsatisfactory. Out of the pantheism and mysticism of the Orient, out of the dualism of Zoroaster, out of the ethical precepts of Confucius, out of the culture of Greece, out of the stoicism of Rome, out of the formalism into which Jewish worship had fallen, was a deep cry of the human soul for more light. Listen to Cicero

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in his *De Legibus:* "We talk as if all the miseries of men were comprehended in death, pain of body and sorrow of mind, but the sting of conscience, the remorse of guilt, is in itself the greatest evil."

A desolating fatalism filled the popular mind. Zeno and Cleanthes both committed suicide. Seneca, one of the noblest of the Stoics, wrote: "Seest thou thy throat, thy heart? They are the ways of escape from bondage." Then he took poison and opened his veins, crying: "Oh, that one might have a guide to truth!" A paralysis of despair was upon the mind of the race. As the Apostle Paul said: "They were without God and without hope in the world."

Would God Meet This Need of Men? It is evident that if God should meet this need of men, He must reveal Himself in a human life in a fulness of indwelling greater than had been before. There must be one who could and would reveal the very truth of God to men as it had not previously been known. Would God do this? Yonder in Palestine there were some people believing God would do this. Some of their prophets, men of vision who had commended themselves to their generation as men of God because of the moral dynamic in their messages, had prophesied that the day would come when such a divine manifestation would be given to men. There would come an "anointed one" who would fulfil the hopes of men in meeting their deepest needs and their highest aspirations. Rec-

ords of the time tell us of a great expectation in the minds of the people. The very air was tremulous with that expectation.

It Is Claimed That God Revealed Himself in Jesus of Nazareth. It is claimed that God did thus reveal Himself to men in Jesus of Nazareth. But note again that this claim of itself carries no conviction to the minds and hearts of men. All who believe it do so because they know in their personal experience and observation of the moral dynamic that Jesus Christ has brought into human life wherever men have given Him place. Some repudiate the claim, the atheists among them. Therefore it is part of our task to prove that these claims are valid. Two lines of thought will be presented: First, the evidence to prove the historic reliability of the Gospel record which portrays the life of Christ. The atheists assert that these records are spurious. Second, the reasons for accepting the character of Christ as portrayed in the Gospels as being the very character of God incarnate in the man Jesus Christ.

IX

THE GOSPEL RECORDS ARE AUTHENTIC AND RELIABLE

SOME Milwaukee atheists have issued a printed statement in which they assert that "the Bible is fraudulent, and all religions are spurious, not being based on facts or evidence." One wonders how far the authors of such a statement have examined the available facts which bear upon the subject. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that they have accepted general statements of those who are not familiar with the subject in the light of the latest investigation and proofs which cannot be gainsaid. For many years some men have repudiated the idea of the supernatural. They must needs offer some explanation of the statements found in the Gospels which furnish us the account of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Atheists Declare the Gospels to Be Legendary. Atheists declare the Gospels to be a collection of legends gathered by the followers of Jesus, and that His character as pictured in the Gospels was only the exalted ideal of enthusiastic Christians, a pious conception of a character utterly impossible for any man to have lived. Our first task is to

present the evidence to prove the records historically reliable. In doing this we will begin with the famous sixteenth chapter of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* In that chapter Gibbon discusses the spread of Christianity around the Mediterranean world, and presents facts which no student of history will question. He tells us that in the year 300 A.D. there were Christian churches crowding the region of North Africa, including the Nile country, and extending throughout consular Asia as far as Italy. He tells us that at that time there were 1,800 bishops, of whom 1,000 were in the Greek provinces and 800 in the Latin provinces of the empire.

Constantine Became a Christian in 313 A.D. In the midst of this amazing spread of Christianity, the emperor Constantine became a Christian in the year 313. Great churches and cathedrals had been built and were too small to meet the needs of the growing congregations. From the year 313 to the year 29 is a period of 284 years, a shorter period than has elapsed since the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth in 1620 and this year 1928. Only one hundred people were in that group, and they had no background of history in America. Why do we believe the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth in 1620? For the very same reason that we believe any historic event to have occurred, *because we have the evidence of its occurrence.* That evidence abounds to prove the fact of their coming and set-

tlement in New England. There are documents, houses, graves, descendants still living among us, tangible relics to which we go back by unbroken lines of indisputable evidence of the historic fact.

In Exactly the Same Manner We Trace Back the History of Christianity. In the first century of the Christian era the flower of Roman civilisation was flourishing, with greater literary activity than existed before or after. The Romans were a very practical people, not given to visionary notions about religion. Their standard of morals was pagan. Their habit of life made it certain that no new religion could make much headway among them unless it possessed a transforming spiritual power of extraordinary character.

References by Roman Historians. Roman historians who lived in the first century made definite references to the spread of Christianity. In his *Lives of the Twelve Cæsars,* Seutonius reports that in the year 54 certain Jews were expelled from Rome because of controversies with the Christians. He also mentions persecutions of Christians by Nero from the year 64 to 68. The historian Tacitus, in his *Annals,* has an extended statement regarding the large numbers of Christians scattered throughout the empire at the time of Nero's persecutions. The famous letter of the Younger Pliny, written to the emperor Trajan in the year 104, is particularly important as it testifies to the superior

moral character of the Christians in contrast to the usual life of the people.

People Do Not Die for Imaginations. Moreover this had gone on in the face of terrible persecutions, during which the Christians revealed heroic devotion to their faith even unto death, rather than surrender allegiance to their standards of honesty and purity. Men do not die for fancies. Nothing more surely proves the absurdity of the statement that those followers of Christ built their movement on legends and foisted them upon a gullible people. Truth that builds noble character does not grow out of false imaginations. It testifies to vital realities in experience.

The Writings of Christian Scholars. During the early years of the Christian development Christian scholars wrote defences of Christianity, and their writings were preserved. Opponents of Christianity also wrote contending against the new teachings. From both of these sources we have quotations from the four Gospels and the Book of the Acts. Polycarp and Papias were both pupils of the Apostle John. Polycarp was bishop of Smyrna, which is but a short distance from Ephesus, the home of John.

Irenæus, who was made bishop of Lyons, in southern France, in the year 177, testifies that he was a pupil of Polycarp. A few doors from my home there resided the only living Daughter of the American Revolution, whose recurring birthday

was celebrated with notable publicity, until she entered into rest. We can readily see that Irenæus had ample time within which to be a pupil of the pupil of the apostle John. He testifies that Polycarp described to him in detail his conversations with the great Christian apostle. Polycarp wrote one epistle in which there are references to fourteen books of the New Testament.

Early Church Fathers Confirm the Authorship of the Gospels. For some years the Gospels were transmitted orally. Every student of history knows how much oral teaching was transmitted in those days, when very little written material was in existence. Much of this oral teaching was quite accurate in its details. Eusebius quotes from Papias who ascribes their Gospels to Matthew and Mark. Thirty years after Polycarp Justin Martyr is conspicuous in the early Church. He was a mature man, distinguished as a philosopher and writer when he became a Christian. He calls the writings from which he quotes *Memoirs Composed by the Apostles and Their Companions.* A disciple of Justin Martyr was Tatian. About the year 170 he compiled a Harmony of the Gospels, entitled *Diatesseron,* which means "Through Four," showing that in his time, and before, the four Gospels were accepted in the Church. Irenæus wrote:

"We have not received the knowledge of the way of our salvation by any other than those by whom the

Gospel has been brought to us, which Gospel they first preached, and afterwards, by the will of God, committed to writing that it might be for time to come the foundation of our faith."

The Testimony of the Opponents of Christianity. There were also opponents of Christianity contending against the teachings of Christ and his apostles. Early in the second century the Gnostics were very active. They accepted Matthew's Gospel record, but rejected the teachings of the Apostles Paul and John. The point to note is that their references to these Gospels proved that the Gospels existed. But more significant is the fact that *never once do the Gnostics question the authorship of these writings.* Had there been the slightest question about that authorship, in the early days of the second century, it is certain that those opponents of Christianity would have seized upon that uncertainty to discredit their authenticity.

Convincing Evidence in the Letters of the Apostle Paul. One of the most convincing lines of evidence is found in the letters of the Apostle Paul, and in the record of his conversion contained in the book of the Acts of the Apostles. It is to be emphasised that all schools of critics accept four of the letters of the Apostle Paul as authentic. They are *First* and *Second Corinthians, Galatians* and *Philippians.* In these four letters we find the Apostle teaching everything essential in the Gospels con-

cerning the life, teachings and death of Jesus Christ.

It is conceded that Paul wrote these letters between the years 50 and 60 A.D. That is to say, we are nearer to the time of Christ in these letters of Paul than we now are to the time of Abraham Lincoln. In his defence before Agrippa (Acts 26: 26), Paul declares: "The king knoweth of these things, for this hath not been done in a corner." Thus Paul emphasised the general knowledge of the historic facts concerning the life and ministry of Christ and the beginnings of the Christian Church before the year 60 A.D.

The Conclusive Testimony of Sir William Ramsey. The outstanding archæologist who has devoted years to the examination of the evidence of the historic reliability of the New Testament is Sir William Mitchell Ramsey. He has written several books, and has comprehended his findings in a recent publication entitled, *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament.* When he began this work Dr. Ramsey rather felt that much of the New Testament material was not historically reliable. Hence his conclusions are all the more valuable.

Ramsey declares: "Luke's history, including the third Gospel and the book of the Acts, is unsurpassed in respect to its trustworthiness. His words stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment." There were seventeen points in question

when Sir William began his investigation. After years of persistent research in the realm of contemporary history, *in every instance,* without one exception, he proved the critics to be wrong and the record correct. The *London Times Literary Supplement* declares: "The long series of discoveries by Sir William M. Ramsey and his coadjutors in Asia Minor has established the Acts' narrative in a position from which later research is unlikely to dethrone it." Again let it be emphasised that this historic reliability of the Acts is positive proof of the historic reliability of the Gospel records.

The Findings of Professor Greenleaf, of Harvard Law School. A generation ago one of the standard textbooks in the law schools of the land was *Greenleaf on Evidence,* by Professor Simon Greenleaf, of the Harvard Law School. This same Professor Greenleaf wrote a book entitled, *The Testimony of the Evangelists,* which is a study of evidence proving the reliability of the Gospel records. He dedicated the book to lawyers, as men accustomed to judge evidence fairly. He asserts that: "Truth never requires the surrender of reason and the judgment, but does require an honest heart, willing to seek the truth and abide by the results." He further says:

"The foundation of our religion is a basis of facts, namely: the life, ministry, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The writers of the Gospels asserted that these things actually occurred, and that

they had personal knowledge of the facts. The question therefore is: Are these men worthy of belief as witnesses, according to the modern tests of credibility?"

Greenleaf on Tests of Credibility Required in Modern Courts. Professor Greenleaf considers at length the tests of credibility made in modern courts of justice and applies them to the Gospel writers and records. He indicates five points involved in determining the credibility of witnesses: First, their honesty; second, their ability; third, the number and consistency of the witnesses; fourth, the degree to which their testimony conforms with experience; fifth, the coincidence of the events testified to with collateral circumstances. The five points Professor Greenleaf discusses at length. He points out that the teaching of these men was not popular, resulting in persecution unto death. He declares that the heroism of these men has never been surpassed. To charge them with being dishonest, or anything but absolutely sincere, is simply contrary to all reason.

The Gospel Writers Meet the Tests. As to their ability, three points are noted: First, their opportunity to observe; second, their accuracy of observation; third, their fidelity of memory. The records abound with evidence that the writers possessed these gifts. As to their consistency, while they have a marked variety, proving the absence of collusion; yet they all agree in the main es-

sentials of their testimony. When it comes to having the testimony conform to experience, ordinary experience has no ground for accepting the miracles reported. Here Professor Greenleaf develops at length the fact that the writers claim that Jesus was more than a man, and that this is a vital part of their testimony.

Miracles of Grace Continue to This Day. He asserts that any man who will test the teachings of Jesus Christ and the history of His proved power to help men find victory over their sins, will find the miracles of grace constantly recorded in human experience to this day. Christ actually accomplishes a transformation in the lives of men and women such as no human power could accomplish. Thousands of the best men and women who ever lived through the Christian centuries stand to confirm this testimony. Hence the testimony regarding Christ's miracles of healing and of ministering to human need in the exercise of supernatural power, becomes credible. On the fifth point Professor Greenleaf shows that every important event in human history has a series of facts leading up to it, surrounding it and growing out of it. The more of these facts there are, the greater the impossibility of escaping detection. These contemporaneous facts we have mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Modern Courts Would Be Compelled to Admit the Gospels As Valid Documentary Evidence. Pro-

fessor Greenleaf tells us that the law recognises every document coming from a proper repository, having no evidence of forgery upon it, as genuine until proved otherwise. He also says that copies of MSS., when known to have been made by interested persons free from suspicion, are accepted in court in lieu of the original. No lawyer would question the validity of a copy of a franchise of such character. Therefore Professor Greenleaf asserts that the Gospels would be admitted in any modern court as valid evidence of the testimony recorded in them by their writers regarding the life and ministry, the miracles and teachings, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Thus we have brought the evidence to prove that the historical material of the New Testament was produced in the second half of the first Christian century, and that said material is historically reliable. The atheists will have a hard time justifying their statement that these Gospels are "fraudulent and spurious, not being based on facts or evidence." Let it be noted that no copy of a Greek or Latin classic now known is older than the seventh century A.D.; whereas we have authentic MSS. of the New Testament reaching back into the fourth century close to the time when the Roman Empire became Christian.

X

THE GOSPEL PORTRAIT OF CHRIST VINDICATED

THE evidence presented in the preceding chapter proved the authenticity and historic reliability of the Gospel record. In spite of this evidence, the atheists persist in saying that the Gospel picture of Christ cannot be true, for no man could have lived such a life. Hence it must have been idealised beyond the possibility of truth. It is true that no mere man could have lived the life reported in the Gospels. That is one reason for perceiving that no man could possibly have imagined it unless it was actually lived by Christ among men.

The Sincerity of the Writers Cannot Be Impeached. We recall Professor Greenleaf's comment upon the evident sincerity of the Gospel writers. That sincerity breathes upon every page of the record. They testify to the accuracy of their statements. Luke begins his record with the assurance that he "had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, even as they delivered them unto us who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word." John, in his first letter, asserts: "That which was from the

beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life, that declare we unto you." Careful study of the record makes it evident that only eyewitnesses could have written the Gospels.

Either Christ Lived As Reported, Or the Writers Were Able to Create His Teachings and Picture His Character. Plato gave us the *Dialogues of Socrates.* Manifestly either Socrates lived and said the things attributed to him by Plato, or Plato must himself have been able to create the wisdom of Socrates. Thomas Moore wrote a poem entitled, *Lalla Rookh,* in which he introduces a minstrel, reporting the song this minstrel sang. Again it is clear that there was such a singer or Moore himself must have been able to create the song which he attributed to the singer. It is the appreciation of this truth which explains the origin of the phrase, "It took a Shakespeare to produce Shakespeare," which came to be current when the authorship of Shakespeare's plays was being widely discussed. The logic is evident. Either the Gospel writers present a true picture of Christ, or they must have been able to conceive of such a life as he lived and to have created the wisdom which they attribute to him.

No School of Jews Could Have Written the Gospels. It is evident from their contents that the authors of the Gospels were thoroughly familiar with Palestine and the Old Testament. Hence we

must infer that they were Jews or Jewish proselytes. We ask what school of Jews could have originated these Gospels? Evidently no Pharisee would have reported as their ideal Messiah one who spoke in unsparing denunciation of their Pharisaism. No Pharisee would have pictured him as eating with publicans and sinners, touching lepers and repudiating many of the traditions of the elders. No, it could not have originated with any Pharisee.

As for the Sadducees, it was their special emphasis to deny the resurrection of the dead; whereas the Gospels not only report that Jesus raised the dead, and rose from the dead Himself; but clearly taught the fact of the resurrection and pointed His followers to a future life of fellowship with Him in the abiding places of the Father's house. No Sadducee originated these Gospel records. There remain the Essenes, who were ascetics. They criticised Christ and His disciples for "eating and drinking." No Essene would have originated the story of the making of wine at Cana of Galilee. The Essenes must also be eliminated. In fact the Gospels rise above all Jewish conceptions of the expected Messiah. It has been said that Moses was a Hebrew, Confucius was a Chinese, Buddha was an Indian, Socrates was a Greek, Mohammed was an Arabian; but Jesus was the Son of Man, the universal Christ.

The Humanity of Christ. One of the strongest

internal evidences of the absence of any effort to idealise Christ beyond what He actually was is the evidence in the Gospel record that no one at first supposed Him to be more than a man. His neighbours called Him the carpenter, or the carpenter's son. They were surprised at His unsuspected ability as a teacher. At first the people thought Him to be a prophet, while His claim to be the Messiah was viewed with suspicion, for He was not the first to make that claim. Gradually He opened the eyes of His disciples to the truth about Himself.

The Sinlessness of Christ. The first fact which Jesus enabled His disciples to realise was His sinlessness. In the Sermon on the Mount His teachings caused them to be surprised at the high standards which He set up, as in the fifth chapter of Matthew's record. Such standards of absolute sinlessness in thought, not to speak of action, no one had ever suggested before. One only needs to read that chapter to realise the atmosphere of the sense of freedom even from sinful thoughts in the mind of Jesus. This was early in His ministry. Steadily He led them to realise that He was free from sin. One day in Jerusalem, knowing that the leaders were watching Him with lynx eyes to discover the slightest suggestion of imperfection in Him, He challenged them in these words: "Which of you convicteth me of sin? (John 8:46). And if I speak the truth, why do ye not believe on me?"

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This incident was doubly significant because it immediately followed an occurrence of great moment. They brought to Him a woman taken in sin. The law of Moses commanded one such to be stoned. Since He was setting aside some of the laws of Moses, they wanted to know what He would do about this case. In silence Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground for a moment. Then He said: "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her." And they who heard "being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one." It was right after that incident, when their own sense of sin was vivid, that He challenged them to find any sin in Himself.

Principal Fairbairn on the Sinlessness of Christ. Principal Fairbairn, of Mansfield College, Oxford, in his book, *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion,* says on this point:

"He speaks throughout as one who does not belong to the category of sinners, a thing the holiest men have been unable to do. He judged sin as no man ever judged it, and spared it not. Yet he betrays no consciousness of sin, or speaks as if he were, in thought or being, alien from God, or had been guilty of anything which could have made God alien from him. He commands men everywhere to repent, yet nowhere implies that he has need of, or has experienced repentance. His reply to the young ruler, 'Why callest thou me good? There is none good but God,' was evidently meant to teach that a mere title of courtesy did not go

far enough, since he himself possessed the very goodness of God."

Christ's Teaching About the Fatherhood of God. Out of this sinless life which breathed the atmosphere of fellowship with the God of holiness, Christ began to teach His disciples about the Fatherhood of God. The Old Testament had occasionally mentioned the idea of Jehovah being Father, but that idea had been utterly lost out of the popular thinking of Christ's time. The name *Jehovah* was not permitted to be mentioned. It is significant to note that it is not mentioned among the Jews in their worship even to this day, not even in the synagogues of the liberal Jews. The name *Adonai* has been and is now used instead. The general idea about God was that He was too high and holy to approach, and that He was not very near to our daily life.

E. Stanley Jones tells us that one day he asked Professor Harnack: "What is the unique thing in Christianity?" To which Harnack replied: "It is the doctrine of the Father." Perhaps we might agree when the full significance of that doctrine is kept in mind, especially the truth that goes with the fact of the Father's forgiving love. When Jesus began to speak of God as His Father, He occasioned great astonishment. This was one of the objections the rulers made to His claim. They said: "He called God his Father, making himself equal with God." The disciples caught the first

glimpse of the truth when they realised the sinlessness of Christ. It seemed fitting to think of Him as the Son of God, as no man could be. One day He pressed upon them the challenge that they declare their conviction as to who He was, and Peter expressed their conviction in the words: "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Christ's God-Consciousness. Bishop Charles H. Brent, in a recent sermon, said: "It is significant that there are those who claim that He is the Son of God only in the same sense that every child of man is also a child of God. It is pertinent, then, to ask why, in all the intervening centuries there has been no second Christ? We are driven back upon the conclusion reached by a layman's non-partisan study of the Gospels, a conclusion that coincides with the finding of the ages." Bishop Brent then quotes from Don Marquis, who "spurred by the urge of a great sorrow, made an intensive survey of the four Gospels," and in the Introduction to his drama, *The Dark Hours,* reports his conclusion:

"I believe there is a contemporary school of thought which holds that when Jesus spoke of His Father He meant that God is the Father of all of us—the Father of Jesus and of you and me and everybody else. I rather inclined myself to the opinion that such was the meaning of Jesus. But *the careful and repeated examination* of the Bible necessary for this play *has convinced me that it was not His meaning.*

The Conviction of Don Marquis.

"I cannot escape the conviction that He intended to convey that He was the Son of God in a sense special and unique; that He differed from other men who might call God their Father not merely in the degree of His spirituality, but also in the character of his relationship to His Father. I cannot evade the belief that Jesus Himself believed this. He seems to me to have been as explicit as possible in this claim. Either the four Gospels have not reported Him correctly, or He meant just that. At least I can make nothing else out of it, and I began an examination of the Bible with a contrary view.

"It was for this assertion that He was the Son of God that the Sanhedrin condemned Him, for the Sanhedrin considered it blasphemy. If He had meant anything else or anything less, He would have answered otherwise when the question was discharged at Him pointblank by Caiaphas, and His life or death hung upon the answer. He died for that belief because it was His belief. To think of Him as dying for some belief that He did not really hold seems to me to be merely idiocy. You or I may hold what opinion we will; but I do not see how, if we accept His reported utterances as evidence, we can have any doubt as to the opinion of Jesus Himself."

Christ's Power to Forgive Sins. One of the most convincing proofs that Jesus realised His oneness with God as special and unique is the way in which He asserted His power to forgive sins. When He told a man that his sins were forgiven,

the people accused Him of blasphemy, asserting that God only could forgive sins. Jesus immediately accepted that challenge, and said: "Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven, Or to say, Rise, take up thy bed and walk?" Of course it was easier to say the man's sins were forgiven, for no one could tell whether they were or not. But every one could see whether at the word of Jesus the man could take up his mat and walk. Then Jesus said: "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy), Arise and take up thy bed and go into thine house." Then we read that, as the man obeyed, "they were all amazed, and *glorified God,* saying, 'We never saw it on this fashion.'" They believed in Him as the Son of God and able to forgive sins.

Some of the Clear Teachings of Jesus. The Apostle John tells us that the special reason for writing his Gospel, as a supplement to the three Synoptics, was "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." From various parts of his Gospel we select the following statements by Jesus bearing out the contention of Don Marquis, which Bishop Brent rightly declares to be "the finding of the ages":

"I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. . . . Doth this

cause you to stumble? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? . . . He that believeth on me believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. . . . Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works sake. . . . If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

In these words, and others to the same import, we have the God-consciousness of Jesus Christ revealed beyond any reasonable question. We have already proved the historic reliability of the Gospel record from which we have these sayings of Christ.

Conclusions Regarding the Internal Evidence. John Stuart Mill said: "It is of no use to say that Christ as exhibited in the Gospels is not historical. Who among His disciples, or among His converts, was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels?" Goethe said: "These Gospels must be thoroughly genuine, for there shines forth from them the reflected splendour of a sublimity proceeding from the person of Jesus Christ of so divine a character as only the divine could have manifested on earth."

To this Henry van Dyke adds: "The testimony of eighteen centuries to the impossibility of ex-

plaining the personality of Christ on humanitarian grounds is in itself an evidence of His divinity." St. Augustine said: "I have read in Plato and Cicero sayings that are very wise and very beautiful, but I never read in either of them: 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' "

Christ Transcends All Others. Thus also Rousseau writes:

"How petty are the books of the philosophers with all their pomp compared with the Gospels! Can it be that writings at once so simple and so sublime are the work of men? Can He whose life they tell Himself be no more than a mere man? My friends, men do not invent like this. The Gospels have characteristics of truthfulness so grand, so striking that they are perfectly inimitable."

And Schleiermacher said:

"In the presence of Christ all my philosophical and historical criticism is silent. In the entire history of humanity I find no analogy to Him. The whole history of humanity before Him and after Him points to Him, and in Him finds its centre and its solution. His deeds, His conduct, His addresses, have a supernatural character, being altogether inexplicable from human relations and human means. I feel that there is something more than man, that He must be a divine ambassador."

God Has Been Revealed in Jesus Christ. There can be but one logical conclusion from the facts

presented in this chapter. That is the unescapable conclusion that God has been revealed to men in Jesus Christ as in no other life known to human history. It has been said that "Jesus Christ is the Unanswerable Argument for God." Nothing else can explain Him aside from the fact that God was incarnate in Him. His teachings embodied all of value that had been spoken before His coming, and nineteen centuries have not been able to add a single thought of moral value that He did not anticipate. Well may we repeat the words of Peter, when the thought of turning to any one else was suggested: "Lord, to whom shall we go, but unto Thee? For Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we are sure that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

XI

CHRIST'S REVELATIONS OF GOD

IN the preceding chapter we thought of the God-likeness of Christ. It is a part of our appreciation of the truth that we also think of the Christ-likeness of God. The incarnation of God in Jesus Christ makes this fact luminous and necessary to our thinking. Every seeker after truth is asking: "What is God like? Not so much in the realm of His power as Creator, or His design in the processes of nature, but what is the character of God in that phase of His life in which He comes into personal relations with men?" In seeking light in this inquiry our one source of adequate knowledge is Jesus Christ Himself. As introductory to the special points which reveal God's thought for men in the divine programme for mankind, it will be important to note some general facts about Christ as a teacher, and the general atmosphere of His thinking throughout His ministry.

Christ Always Related Truth to Life. The teaching of Jesus was not academic or scholastic. It was always related to the life of men. It was always a way of truth, and also a way of living. "The common people heard him gladly" because His

teaching was as simple as it was profound. He appealed to their good judgment as well as to their moral perceptions. He was a conversationalist, quiet and direct. He did not use academic definitions. When asked to define what a neighbour is, He told the parable of the Good Samaritan. That left nothing to be added. No one could imagine Plato taking a little child in his arms and making concrete in one sentence his teaching about purity, trust and filial relation between man and God, as Jesus did.

His Teaching Was Positive Rather than Negative. In an earlier chapter we emphasised the necessity of positive teaching in order to constructive thinking and definite conviction. Jesus was thus positive. Moses said: "Thou shalt not"; but Jesus said: "Thou shalt love." When the leaders of the people tried to entrap Him with their questions, they were amazed at His keen and conclusive replies. They asked Him if they should pay taxes to Cæsar. It was a much debated question, for they paid taxes under protest, and any one who approved the system was denounced as unpatriotic. Jesus took a Roman coin, asking whose image and superscription it bore. They replied: "Cæsar's." Then He said: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's."

He Emphasised the Spiritual Character of the Kingdom of God. It was most important that the people should realise that the Kingdom Christ came

to establish was not primarily an earthly kingdom, but a spiritual reign of God in the lives of men. One day He put to the leaders the question: "What think ye of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They quickly replied: "David's." Upon which Jesus asked: "How then did David call him Lord?" Evidently they had never measured the deep significance of this fact. They expected an earthly kingdom, although they also considered that it would be distinctively a kingdom of God, in that His people would have his favour in earthly matters.

Christ knew that they must see their mistake and realise that the messianic kingdom was above everything else spiritual. So he led them to see that David recognised the spiritual superiority of the Messiah, rather than the fact of the physical sonship. They saw the point, and refused to answer, for they realised the logical conclusion to be that Jesus could then press the point that the Messiah was to be the spiritual leader that He was. The people saw the dilemma in which Jesus had placed their leaders, and that God was far more concerned about their spiritual lives than about any earthly kingdom. This was fundamental to much more that Jesus taught them as a revelation of the mind and heart of God.

Christ's World View About God and Man. Every philosopher has what is called a "world view." In thinking of Jesus as a philosopher, we

must not only have in mind His intellectuality, but also His spiritual vision. He was not simply intellectually alert beyond other philosophers; but His keen intellectuality took on a quality of appreciation of spiritual values such as we find in no other recognised leader in the realm of human thinking. Jesus not only had a definite philosophy regarding God's concern for each individual human soul, as already emphasised; but He also had a philosophy of life in general, involving man's relation to God, man's place in the movement of the ages and man's place in the universe of worlds. His was no contracted or limited mind.

Christ Saw the Universe Shot Through With Personality. Christ constantly revealed a knowledge of the natural order as being, not an impersonal movement; but as the sphere in which the living God is the constant actor and explanation. God causeth the sun to rise and the rain to fall on the just and unjust alike. In the exercise of His infinite capacity to note the infinitesimal, He marks the falling of the sparrow and numbers the hairs of our heads. Christ's philosophy of nature is anything but materialism, or agnosticism, or pantheism. It is a theistic philosophy with a personal God as its creator and ruler, who maintains a most intimate touch with every creature as a loving Father. The world of sense is real; but it is inferior in character to the world of the spirit, which is not only dominant, but of unspeakably superior

significance and value. One of the questions of the philosophers is: What is reality? With Jesus the supreme reality is personality. He sees the world as made up primarily of intelligent personalities. Things happen because laws are at work, and the laws are explained by lawgivers, divine and human.

Man's Relation to God the Basis for the Solution of All Human Problems. Moreover, with Christ, man's relation to God is the basis for the solution of all human problems. It is as man becomes a citizen of the kingdom of God that he adjusts himself aright to all the relationships of life, for time and eternity. Written into the very fibre of our constitution is the evidence that our God is specially concerned about our spiritual development. He would have our appreciation of that fact quick and keen and commanding, so that the culture of our spiritual lives shall be uppermost always. This is emphasised by Christ in the words: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." So the Apostle John writes to his friend Gaius: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, *as thy soul prospereth.*"

The Fact of Man's Sin in the Background of Human History. Coming now to several specific features of Christ's revelations of God, the first thing we must try to appreciate is *the way He deals with sin and with man as a sinner.* In Christ's

time the people used the word "sinners" differently from what we do. When they spoke of "publicans and sinners," they did not have in mind only those who were bad morally, but also those who were not socially recognised. They did not think of themselves as sinners if they were faithful in observing the ceremonial law. Jesus put his finger on that point of self-righteousness in the parable where He recited the prayers of the Pharisee and the publican: the one thanked God that he was not as other men, or even as "this publican"; whereas the publican smote upon his breast and cried: "God be merciful to me a sinner!" It was a revolutionary statement on Christ's part when He said: "I tell you this man was justified, rather than the other."

Men Everywhere Recognise Their Moral Failure. We have noted that sin is lawlessness. One of the worst forms of lawlessness is the exercise of self-will against the will of God. This may not be in the realm of overt sin which all condemn; but may be in more subtle ways, which are just as fatal, since they estrange man from God by denying loyalty to God's will, for sin primarily is not a matter of quantity but of disloyalty. Men everywhere recognise their moral failure. Professor Walter Rauschenbusch, in his book, *A Theology for The Social Gospel, says:*

"A serious and humble sense of sinfulness is part of a religious view of life. To lack the consciousness of sin is a symptom of moral immaturity, or of an

effort to keep the shutters down and the light out. The most highly developed individuals who have the power of interpreting life for others, and who have the clearest realisation of possible perfection and the keenest hunger for righteousness also commonly have the most poignant sense of their shortcomings."

Two things spring out of this sense of sin and failure: First, the spirit of repentance, a genuine sorrow because of the sin, and Second, the sense of need of help outside of and beyond one's self, conscious as we are of our inability to win our victory over sin in our own resources.

No Limit to the Forgiving Love of God. Supreme in importance in Christ's revelation of God is the fact that God offers forgiveness to men who repent of their sins and turn to Him in faith. It has always been difficult for men to believe this. Jesus gave them a picture of it in the story of the father of the prodigal son, who "came to himself" in his sin and went back in penitence to confess his sin, only to be forgiven and welcomed back to sonship. One day Peter asked how many times we should forgive one who might sin against us, and suggested seven times. That was going much beyond what most of us would do. But Jesus replied: "Seventy times seven," intimating that there is no limit to God's readiness to forgive. One might well define infinite love as *a love that never gets tired of forgiving.* That is the love of God which Christ reveals toward penitent men. It must

be seen that no sin, however small, as men judge, can be forgiven unless it is repented. On the other hand no sin can be so great, if repented, but will be lovingly forgiven.

The Significance of Faith in the Teaching of Christ. Faith is much more than an intellectual conviction as to the truth of a certain teaching. The larger idea is seen in the revised translation of John 3 : 16, where we read "believeth *on* him," rather than "*in* him," as in the authorised version. This true faith casts on one's self its object, not doubting the power to sustain and the promise to exercise that power in salvation and keeping unto victory. Note the case of Jairus the ruler, where we see how his faith met the condition of the spiritual law of God, so that the power of God was released in the healing of his daughter. Christ taught that faith is something dynamic. It puts the trolley on the wire. It is a rallying of all the forces of the soul in an out-reaching toward God's available power, in forgiving love, in healing blessings, in seeking the joyous fellowship of God in Christ, in committing the whole life to Him as Saviour and Lord. In all this exercise of faith there is the intelligent appreciation of the fact that God always works along the lines of His laws. No exercise of divine power is ever contrary to law.

The Place of Prayer in the Life According to Christ. The third subject of vital importance in the teaching and practice of Jesus is that of prayer.

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At the outset we must note Christ's purpose to make it clear that there are conditions to acceptable and prevailing prayer which must be met before one can expect the prayer to be answered. It is the inner spirit that determines the value of the uttered word in petition. If we hope to be forgiven, we must be ready to forgive. Unless we truly repent of our sins, we do not really seek forgiveness, but only to escape the consequences. True repentance involves the desire for utmost cleansing, so that the sin shall never be repeated. Nothing can be more profitable than a careful study of Christ's teachings about prayer. Moreover, He practised His own teaching here as always. He spent "all night" in prayer. He arose very early to go alone to pray. Prayer is more than asking for things. It is a culture of the fellowship of the Father. And one must ever give time to the culture of friendship. The blessings which follow cannot be overestimated.

The Superior Value of Spiritual Possessions Over Material. One cannot study the teachings of Jesus very long before it becomes apparent that one of His most earnest desires was to have men appreciate the truth that earthly possessions are absorbing the minds and plans and efforts of men to the loss of the far superior values of spiritual worth. Every one knows how much this tendency has place in all human living, and also how far short its satisfaction comes of satisfying the long-

ings of the immortal spirit. Too many are concerned almost entirely with the scaffolding, instead of the temple which we should be building as we climb on the factors which contribute to the actual acquisition of the supreme values, and which should never be confused with the values themselves. "Labor not for the meat that perisheth; but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life."

This life that is hid with Christ in God, which brings the conscious presence of the Spirit of God into our daily affairs, develops the awareness of the divine quality of life as something eternal. It is the surviving power of eternal love, which feeds upon itself and grows with every repeated exercise, and therefore can never die.

Christ's Teaching and Practice of Service. Jesus had much to say about service, and he lived it every waking hour. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." God is ever living to give Himself to us, giving us His mind, His love, His power, His life increasingly as we will receive Him and His gifts. Christ's service for us involved His whole redeeming programme. The Cross enters into His programme, and He makes it clear that unless we recognise the place of the Cross in His life, and give it place in ours, we must have missed the heart of the life of service, which is a sacrificial spirit of surrender to the doing of the will of God. Moreover He makes it clear that in His life and in ours the deepest motive in that service must be a concern for

the salvation of men from sin unto God. It will be impossible for any one catching Christ's spirit of service, and Christ's programme for the salvation of the whole human race, to be complacently indifferent to the fact that millions as yet have never known of Him.

Christ's Victories to Be Shared With His Redeemed. Another question which concerns the philosophers is that of progress. Is progress a reality or an illusion? The atheist sees nothing ahead but the endless ebb and flow of humanity, and he offers no real motive for trying to make life worth while. How immeasureable is the gulf between his view and that of Christ! He sees the movement of history leading to a victorious consummation. To His wondering and fearful disciples He said: "Fear not, little flock. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." To His disciples he also said: "These things I have said unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulations; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

What world? Not the beautiful world of nature, with glorious flowers and fruits, its singing birds and dancing brooks, its majestic ocean and cloud-capped mountains, its glistening lakes and wondrous sunsets—not that world! But the world that is enmity against God, that is hostile to the life that is revealed by Jesus Christ, that has no place for the Holy Spirit who guides us into the

truth that makes us free from the slaveries of sin by His regenerating grace. That world cannot give you peace, neither peace with God, nor peace in your own soul.

Christ's Victories Link Earth to Heaven. It is the victorious Christ who speaks this word of peace, and He alone. He saw Gethsemane just ahead, and Calvary beyond, yet quietly lifted up His soul to God, saying: "And now come I to Thee . . . O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." To His saddened disciples, at the end of His earthly ministry, He said: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many abiding places. *If it were not so, I would have told you.* I go to prepare a place for you. And I will come again to receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." This is the victorious Christ who has revealed God to men. We have spoken of the Christlikeness of God.

Summing up the teachings which He has given us, as set forth in this chapter, we are prepared to say that God is like Jesus Christ, and just because of this truth we have great joy, for it is in this Christ that God has opened before our feet the pathway

everlasting which grows bright and brighter unto the perfect day.

Christ Was God Manifest in the Flesh. In the preceding paragraph we have embodied the words of the Apostle Paul in his first letter to Timothy. It is important that we consider this assertion a little further. We have noted the maxim in Pedagogy that no lesson is really taught until it is actually learned. We may go further and say that the evidence that any one has learned the truth is proved in his ability to tell it to others so that they also may possess it and its values. We must go still further and say that when any truth only reveals its value as it is lived in the daily life, the teacher who would give full demonstration of the value of such truth must live it in his life to prove its reality and power. It is just here that we must test the various religious teachers who are sometimes mentioned as being as worthy of allegiance as is Jesus Christ. Any teacher who assumes to tell us what God is like, and what God's programme is for mankind, must prove that he himself has found the truth for us by living it in his own life.

If Moses saw the truth about God in its reality and fulness, and it possessed his life with vitalising power until he lived it; then God must be like Moses. If Buddha saw the truth about God in its reality and fulness, and it possessed his life with vitalising power until he lived it; then God must be like Buddha. If Rama Krishna saw the truth

about God in its reality and fulness, and it possessed his life with vitalising power until he lived it; then God must be like Rama Krishna. If Confucius saw the truth about God in its reality and fulness, and it possessed his life with vitalising power until he lived it; then God must be like Confucius. If Mohammed saw the truth about God in its reality and fulness, and it possessed his life with vitalising power until he lived it; then God must be like Mohammed.

Who that knows the life of any of these men at their best would be ready to say that God is like any of them? Ah, no! There is only one who stands this test. And it is because Jesus Christ knew the truth about God in its reality and fulness, and it possessed His life with vitalising power until He lived it before men, that men say God must be like Jesus Christ. It is as men have come to know Him increasingly, that they have cried, with the disciple Thomas: "My Lord and my God!"

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